Early Buddhist *Dhammakāya*:

Its Philosophical and Soteriological Significance

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Abstract

This work proposes a different interpretation of the early Buddhist term *dhammakāya* (Skt. *dharmakāya*) which has been long understood, within the academic arena, to owe its philosophical import only to Mahāyāna Buddhism.

In the introductory chapter, this study reviews scholarly interpretations of the term *dhammakāya* as it is used in early Buddhist texts and locates the problems therein. It observes that the mainstream scholarly interpretation of the Pali *dhammakāya* involves an oversimplification of the canonical passages and the employment of incomplete data. The problems are related mainly to possible interpretations of the term's two components - *dhamma* and *kāya* - as well as of the compound *dhammakāya* itself. Some scholarly use of Chinese *Āgama* references to supplement academic understanding of the early Buddhist *dhammakāya* involves similar problems. Besides, many references to *dharmakāya* found in the Chinese *Āgama*s are late and perhaps should not be taken as representing the term's meaning in early Buddhism**.** This work, thus, undertakes a close examination of relevant aspects of the Pali terms *dhamma*, *kāya*, and *dhammakāya* in the second, the third, and the fourth chapters respectively. Occasionally, it discusses also references from the Chinese *Āgama*s and other early Buddhist sources where they are relevant. The methodologies employed are those of textual analysis and comparative study of texts from different sources. The result appears to contradict mainstream scholarly interpretations of the early Buddhist *dhammakāya*,

especially that in the Pali canon. It suggests that the interpretation of the term, in the early Buddhist usage, in an exclusive sense of 'teachings collected together' or 'collection of teaching' is insufficient or misleading and that a more appropriate interpretation is a 'body of enlightening qualities' from which the teachings originate. That being the case, *dhammakāya* appears to be the essence of enlightenment attained by early Buddhist nobles of all types and levels.

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Abbreviations

General Abbreviations

BJ	Sinhalese *Buddhajayantī* version of the Pali *Tipiṭaka*
CS	Burmese *Chaṭṭhasaṅgāyanā* version of the Pali *Tipiṭaka*
lit.	literally
P.	Pali
PTS	The Pali Text Society
PTSD	Pali-English Dictionary of the Pali Text Society
Skt.	Sanskrit
SR	Thai *Syamraṭṭha* version of the Pali *Tipiṭaka*
T.	Chinese *Tripiṭaka* (Taisho edition)

Abbreviations of texts

A	*Aṅguttara-nikāya*
Abhdhp	*Abhidhānappadīpikā*
AbhAv	*Abhidhammāvatāra* (CS version)
AbhK	*Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam*
Ap	*Apadāna*
D	*Dīgha-nikāya*
DA	*Dīghanikāya-aṭṭhakathā*
DAnT	*Dīghanikāya-abhinavaṭīkā*
DhA	*Dhammapada-aṭṭhakathā*
Dhs	*Dhammasaṅgaṇī*
DhsA	*Dhammasaṅgaṇī-aṭṭhakathā*
DT	*Dīghanikāya-ṭīkā*
It	*Itivuttaka*
ItA	*Itivuttaka-aṭṭhakathā*
J	*Jātaka*
JA	*Jātaka-aṭṭhakathā*
M	*Majjhima-nikāya*
MA	*Majjhimanikāya-aṭṭhakathā*

Miln	*Milindapañho*
MT	*Majjhimanikāya-ṭīkā*
Nd1	*Mahāniddesa*
NdA	*Niddesa-aṭṭhakathā*
NettA	*Netti-aṭṭhakathā*
Pp	*Puggapaññatti*
PPA	*Pañca-pakaraṇa-aṭṭhakathā*
PPT	*Pañca-pakaraṇa-ṭīkā*
Ps	*Paṭisambhidāmagga*
S	*Saṃyutta-nikāya*
Sn	*Suttanipāta*
SnA	*Suttanipāta-aṭṭhakathā*
SrD	*Sāratthadīpanī*
Th	*Theragāthā-Therīgāthā*
ThrA	*Theragāthā-aṭṭhakathā*
ThīA	*Therīgāthā-aṭṭhakathā*
Ud	*Udāna*
Vbh	*Vibhaṅga*
Vin	*Vinaya-piṭaka*
VinA	*Vinaya-piṭaka-aṭṭhakathā*
VjB	*Vinayabuddhi-ṭīkā* (CS version)
Vism	*Visuddhimagga*
Ym	*Yamaka*

Referencing of Primary Resources

Referencing of the Pali Texts

1. The main source of Pali *Tipiṭaka* is the version of the Pali Text Society (PTS).

2. The referencing consists of the abbreviation of the text title (in 'Abbreviations'), volume, and page number(s) respectively. All are punctuated with a period. For example, 'D.III.84' refers to *Dīgha-nikāya*, volume 3, page 84 of the PTS version.

3. In case the text contains only one volume, the volume number is not indicated. For example, 'Sn.24' refers to the *Sutta-nipāta* page 24.

4. Additional sources are the Pali *Tipiṭaka* of the *Chaṭṭhasaṅgāyanā* (CS), *Syāmaraṭṭha* (SR), and *Buddhajayantī* (BJ) versions. The style of referencing of these texts follows that of the PTS version, with the abbreviation of the version of text added at the end. For example, 'S.V.112 (CS)' refers to *Saṃyutta-nikāya*, volume 5, page 112 of the *Chaṭṭhasaṅgāyanā* version.

Referencing of the Chinese *Āgama*s

1. The main source is the Taisho edition.

2. The reference number includes the letter 'T' (*Taisho Tripiṭaka*) followed by the sequential number of the *sūtra*, volume number, page number and section(s) respectively. All elements are punctuated with a period. For example, 'T.125.I.549c' refers to Chinese *Tripiṭaka* (Taisho edition), *sūtra* 125, volume 1, page 549, section c. (Each page contains three sections: a, b, and c.)

Chapter 1
INTRODUCTION

> Adhigato kho me ayaṃ dhammo gambhīro duddaso duranubodho santo paṇīto atakkāvacaro nipuṇo paṇḍitavedanīyo. … Ahañ c'eva kho pana dhammaṃ deseyyaṃ pare ca me na ājāneyyuṃ.
>
> Vin.I.4-5, M.I.167-168, S.I.136.
>
> This *dhamma*[1] attained by me is deep, hard to see, hard to comprehend, serene, subtle, beyond the dominion of reasoning, recondite, apprehensible only to the wise. … Would I preach the *dhamma*, others will not understand.[2]

From the very beginning of Buddhist recorded history, two particular meanings of the term *dhamma*, 'reality realised' and 'teaching taught' by the Buddha, have been closely related. In the above passage, which is generally regarded as a revelation of the Buddha's thought after his perfect enlightenment and prior to his first teaching;[3] the word *dhamma* is used in these two distinct contexts. Its first appearance in the phrase '*dhamma* attained by me' (*adhigato… dhammo*) represents the 'reality realised' or spiritually experienced by the Buddha. Its occurrence in the second phrase 'would I preach the *dhamma*' (*dhammaṃ deseyyaṃ*) stands for the 'teaching taught' by the Buddha which can be regarded as the 'verbal expression' of the reality he has realised. In this latter sense, the term *dhamma* equals the English word 'truth,' being a true

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[1] This study uses Pali diacritics for technical terms throughout, except in the discussion related to Buddhist traditions in which the Sanskrit usage is more appropriate. In the latter case, the Sanskrit form will be used instead.

Both the Pali and Sanskrit diacritics are italicised. Exceptions are made for proper or specific names, unless they are being referred to in Pali phrases. This is done in accordance with the standard practice employed in the field of Buddhist studies.

In quotations from secondary sources, this work keeps all original formats used in the references being cited.

In this work, the word *dhamma* is not capitalised, in order to allow readers to perceive the term's wide range of usage.

As the study of Indian philosophy develops in the west, some Pali or Sanskrit words become well-known to English users and find their way into English dictionaries. Then, they become accepted by English users as common English words, and appear without their Pali or Sanskrit diacritical signs. For example, English users are more familiar with the words 'Pali' and 'Sanskrit' than with their Indian forms '*Pāli*' and '*Sāṃskṛta*.' In such case, this work employs their English forms, and the words are not italicised. However, the names of Buddhist schools are presented in their original Indian form, with diacritical signs, even though some of them are well known to English users by their English names. For example, this work writes 'Theravāda' and 'Mahāyāna,' even though their English forms 'Theravada' and 'Mahayana' are well known. This is done in order to retain the consistency in regard to the presentation of names of Buddhist schools. Similar exceptions are made for some words that have assumed a broader or different context in English usage and may convey different meanings from their original Indian Buddhist meanings. In the latter case, this present study uses instead their original Indian forms, and they are italicised. Thus, Buddhism's highest goal of practice is expressed in this work as '*Nibbāna*,' rather than 'Nirvana.'

[2] Throughout this thesis, all English translations are mine, unless indicated otherwise.

[3] This passage usually appears in a narration of events related to the Buddha's enlightenment.

statement referring to the reality. Thus, the Pali term '*dhamma*' subsumes the meanings of both the 'reality realised' by the Buddha and the 'teaching taught' by him. As a result, the 'reality' is sometimes confused with 'its verbal expression.' Harrison considers this to be an ambiguity 'built into' the term *dhamma* which constitutes part of the compound word *dhamma-kāya*.[4] Therefore, such an interrelatedness of these two aspects of the term *dhamma* and the profound nature of the *dhamma* itself have obscured the import of the early Buddhist *dhammakāya* up to the present day.

Overview

The term '*dhammakāya*' (Skt. '*dharmakāya*'), usually translated as *'dhamma*-body,' is well-known among Buddhists of all traditions. It appears in both early Buddhist texts[5] and Mahāyāna treatises.[6] Morever, the term appears also in other Buddhist traditional writings such as the post-canonical Pali literature of the Theravādins and the Sanskrit literature of the Sarvāstivādins. However, its meanings and usages vary in different Buddhist schools.

In Mahāyāna philosophy,[7] *dharmakāya*[8] plays an important role in people's thought and practice, but its conception is complex and very diverse.[9]

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[4] Paul Harrison, "Is the *Dharma-Kāya* the Real "Phantom Body" Of the Buddha?," *The Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 15, no. 1 (1992): 44-76, 56.

[5] The phrases 'early Buddhism,' 'early Buddhist,' and 'early Buddhist schools' in this work refer to what is generally regarded as prior to Mahāyāna thought. It is perhaps similar to what scholars call 'Hīnayāna Buddhism' [Nalinaksha Dutt, "The Doctrine of *Kāya* in Hīnayana and Mahāyāna," *The Indian Historical Quarterly* 5, no. 3 (1929): 518-546.], or 'Mainstream Buddhism' [Harrison, op. cit., p. 77, note 8; Paul Williams and Anthony Tribe, *Buddhist Thought : A Complete Introduction to the Indian Tradition* (London: Routledge, 2000), pp. 112-130.], although these two titles seem to be a little broader as they cover also traditional or post-canonical thought. In the present study, 'early Buddhism' refers exclusively to the canonical period, while post-canonical writings are differentitated as 'traditional literature.'

While Buddhists may belong to different schools either by their different disciplines (*vinaya*) or philosophy (*dhamma*), the term 'school' in this work concerns only their philosophical differences.

[6] Scholarly works that mention the appearance of this term in both the early Buddhist texts and Mahāyāna treatises are such as Ruben L. F. Habito, "The Notion of Dharmakāya: A Study in the Buddhist Absolute," *Journal of Dharma* 11 (1986): 348-378; Barbara E. Reed, "The Problem of the *Dharmakāya* as Seen by Hui-Yüan and Kumārajīva" (Ph.D., The University of Iowa, 1982); Guang Xing, *The Concept of the Buddha: Its Evolution from Early Buddhism to the Trikāya Theory*, RoutledgeCurzon Critical Studies in Buddhism (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2005).

[7] In this work, the phrase 'Mahāyāna philosophy' subsumes also the teaching claimed to be of Vajrayāna Buddhism, as both titles generally share the same philosophy, while being distinctive with respect to their methods and goals of practice. For an example of a statement regarding their similarities and differences, see Reginald A. Ray, *In the Presence of Masters: Wisdom from 30 Contemporary Tibetan Buddhist Teachers* (Boston, Mass.: Shambhala, 2004), p. 14.

[8] As this paragraph concerns the context of Mahāyāna Buddhism, it employs the Sanskrit form of diacritics, which is more commonly used, rather than Pali.

Generally, it is regarded as the only real body among the three bodies of the Buddha,[10] being an expression of his 'enlightened awareness.'[11] Some Mahāyāna texts describe it as the cosmic body that is all-pervading, being the self that is pure, blissful, and eternal,[12] and equate it with other terms such as *tathāgatagarbha*, *tathatā*, *śūnyatā, dharmadhātu*, and *Buddhadhātu*.[13] A Mahāyāna movement founded by Shinran identifies the Amida Buddha, who is described in Mahāyāna *sūtra*s[14] as the Buddha of the west, with *dharmakāya* which is formless and ultimate.[15] In one Mahāyāna practice, the *dharmakāya* is identified with 'the Buddha's textual body' and is worshipped by means of recitation, inscription, and/or veneration of *sūtra*s, especially the *prajñāpāramitā*.[16] Some Mahāyāna Buddhists identify the *dharmakāya* with everything in the phenomenal world.[17] Possibly due to such a wide range and complexity of conception, previous scholars have conducted a large number of

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9 For example, see Paul Williams, *Mahāyāna Buddhism*, Library of Religious Beliefs and Practices. (London; New York: Routledge, 1989) pp. 167-170; Harrison, op. cit., p. 44; John J. Makransky, *Buddhahood Embodied: Sources of Controversy in India and Tibet* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997), p. xiii.

10 Yajneshwar S. Shastri, *Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkara of Asanga: A Study in Vijñānavāda Buddhism*, 1st ed., Bibliotheca Indo-Buddhica; 65 (Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications, 1989), p. 65.

According to Mahāyāna *Trikāya* theory, a Buddha possesses three bodies. These are *dharmakāya* (the *dharma*-body or the body of truth), *Sambhogakāya* (the enjoyment-body or celestial body), and the *Nirmāṇakāya* (the emanation-body or visionary body). Among the three, only the *dharmakāya* ultimately exists. It is the ground from which the other two bodies originate. Further information regarding the *Trikāya* theory may be found in Encyclopedias or Dictionaries of Buddhism or religion, including the following works:

John J. Makransky, "Buddhahood and Buddha Bodies," in *Encyclopedia of Buddhism*, ed. Robert E. Buswell (New York: Macmillan Reference, USA, 2004); Geoffrey Parrinder, "Triads," in *Encyclopedia of Religion*, ed. Lindsay Jones, *Gale Virtual Reference Library.* (Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2005); Frank Reynolds and Charles Hallisey, "Buddha," in *Encyclopedia of Religion*, ed. Lindsay Jones, *Gale Virtual Reference Library* (Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2005).

11 Makransky, *Buddhahood Embodied*, op. cit., p. 5.

12 William H. Grosnick, "Tathāgatagarbha," in *Encyclopedia of Buddhism*, ed. Robert E. Buswell (New York: Macmillan Reference, USA, 2003), p. 827. Herein, the article refers to the *Śrīmālādevī-sūtra*.

13 Habito, "The Notion of Dharmakāya," op. cit., p. 5, Xing, op. cit., p. 75.

14 In pluralising a Pali or Sanskrit term, this work conforms to the presently popular usage in the field, adding the suffix 's' to the singular Pali or Sanskrit word. This is done for the sake of readability for readers who are not familiar with the complex grammatical rules of Indian languages. However, in order to indicate the application of such an English rule of pluralisation to those Indian diacritics, the suffix 's' is not italicised, while the original Pali or Sanskrit word is italicised as usual. Thus, this work writes, for example, '*dhamma*s' and '*sūtra*s' instead of '*dhammā*' and '*sūtrāni*' for the plural forms of the Pali and Sanskrit words '*dhamma*' and '*sūtra*' respectively.

15 Alfred Bloom, "Shinran," in *Encyclopedia of Religion*, ed. Lindsay Jones, *Gale Virtual Reference Library* (Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2005), pp. 8354-8355.

16 Natalie Gummer, "Buddhist Books and Texts: Ritual Uses of Books," in *Encyclopedia of Religion*, ed. Lindsay Jones, *Gale Virtual Reference Library* (Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2005), p. 1261; Yuichi Kajiyama, "Stūpas, the Mother of Buddhas, and Dharma-Body," in *New Paths in Buddhist Research*, ed. Anthony Kennedy Warder (Durham, N.C.: Acorn Press, 1985), pp. 12-15. Williams refers also to Kajiyama's work in his writing regarding the *dharmakāya* in Mahāyāna thought. Williams, *Mahāyāna Buddhism*, op. cit., p. 172.

17 Gregory P. Fields, *Religious Therapeutics: Body and Health in Yoga, Ayurveda, and Tantra*, Suny Series in Religious Studies. (Albany: State University of New York, 2001), p. 170.

studies in relation to different aspects of the Buddha's *dharmakāya* according to Mahāyāna philosophy.[18]

In contrast, there has been no detailed study thus far on early Buddhist *dhammakāya*, especially in regard to its philosophical and soteriological significance.[19] Even though some of the above works also refer to the term's appearance in early Buddhist texts, they mention it only briefly, mainly to outline a historical background for detailed study of Mahāyāna *dharmakāya*.[20]

Possible reasons for this deficiency seem to be the following. First, some scholars claim that this term appears only once in the Pali canon which represents the early Buddhist thought.[21] Some claim that it occurs four times in the same set of texts.[22] The frequency of its occurrence in early Buddhist texts

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[18] Previous studies were conducted regarding the Mahāyāna *dharmakāya*. Some works concern its origin and development within Buddhist history. For example, see Nalinaksha Dutt, "The Doctrine of *Kāya* in Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna," op. cit.; Nalinaksha Dutt, *Mahāyāna Buddhism* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass,1978); Nagao Gadjin, "On the Theory of Buddha-Body," *Eastern Buddhist* 1, no. 1 (1973); Xing, op. cit.

Some focus on its definition and usage in early and middle Mahāyāna scriptures. See Harrison, op. cit.

Some studies are concerned with the clarification of its meaning as intended in a particular Mahāyāna text. See, for example, John J. Makransky, "Controversy over *Dharmakāya* in India and Tibet: A Reappraisal of Its Basis, Abhisamayālaṃkāra Chapter 8," *The Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 12, no. 2 (1989); Hidenori S. Sakuma, "The Classification of the *Dharmakāya* Chapter of the Abhisamayālaṃkāra by Indian Commentators: The Threefold and the Fourfold Buddhakāya Theories," *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 22 (1994).

Some focus on the problem of different interpretations by distinctive contemporary personalities regarding its meanings and characteristics. Reed, op. cit.; Richard H. Robinson, *Early Mādhyamika in India and China* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1976).

Some try to determine its ultimate aspect as implied in the scriptures, either to provide an explanation for some architectural construction [Paul Mus, *Barabuḍur: Sketch of a History of Buddhism Based on Archaeological Criticism of the Texts* (New Delhi: Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts : Sterling Publishers, 1998)], or to serve Buddhist-Christian comparative studies regarding the absolute. David W. Chappell, "Comparing Dharmakaya Buddha and God: Not an Exercise in Emptiness," in *Spirit within Structure*, ed. Edward J. Furcha and George Johnston (Allison Park, Pa: Pickwick Publications, 1983); Ruben L. F. Habito, "On Dharmakaya as Ultimate Reality: Prolegomenon for a Buddhist-Christian Dialogue," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 12 (1985): 233-252; Habito, "The Notion of Dharmakāya," op. cit.

[19] For ideas regarding many bodies of the Buddha, including *dhammakāya*, as developed in the Theravāda tradition in the south and southeast asian countries, see Frank E Reynolds, "The Several Bodies of the Buddha: Reflections on a Neglected Aspect of Theravāda Tradition," *History of Religion* 16 (1976): 374-389. Herein, the author interestingly points out the use of the term *dhammakāya* within the developed Theravāda tradition in two different ways. The term is used, in the more orthodox strand, to represent 'scriptural legacy' and in the more yogic strand as being a kind of 'body' acquired through spiritual practice and attainment. The author touches also the term's usage in the early period of Buddhism, but only briefly without detailed analysis.

[20] See, for example, Habito, "The Notion of Dharmakāya," op. cit.; Reed, op. cit.; Williams, *Mahāyāna Buddhism*, op. cit.; Harrison, op. cit.

[21] For example, see Williams, *Mahāyāna Buddhism*, op. cit., p. 284, note 5; Harrison, op. cit., p. 50; I. B. Horner, "Early Buddhist Dhamma," *Artibus Asiae* 11, no. 1 (1948): 115-123, 117.

The 'Pali canon' is a set of Buddhist texts belonging to 'Theravāda' - the southern school of Buddhism flourishing in Sri Lanka and Southeast Asian countries. It is generally regarded by Buddhists and scholars alike as the best preserved set of early Buddhist texts. A number of scholars have taken it to be representative of the early Buddhist teachings. This issue will be discussed below.

[22] For example, see Xing, op. cit., p. 22.

might have been considered insufficient to facilitate enough discussion for a separate study. Secondly, some previous studies claim that its appearance in those early texts indicates no philosophic implications.[23] Most scholars are content with the idea that the term's philosophical, and perhaps also soteriological, import belongs to Mahāyāna creation.[24] Even though others have suggested otherwise, their suggestions are either expressed only briefly or their voices are subordinated to the above academic mainstream claim.[25] Probably for these reasons, the early Buddhist *dhammakāya* has not received the scholarly interest it deserves.

The following two sections make a detailed review of two groups of previous scholarly interpretations of early Buddhist *dhammakāya*, traditional and contemporary academic, in order to locate the omissions, parts of which this present study would attempt to fill in.

Traditional Interpretations of Early Buddhist *Dhammakāya*

Traditional views mark the earliest attempts to understand the Buddhist teaching(s) intellectually. Traditional interpretations available to us are mainly the Pali *aṭṭhakathā* (commentaries) and *ṭīkā* (sub-commentaries) of the Theravādins and the *Mahāvibhāṣā*[26] as well as the *Abhidharmakośa* and its *Bhāṣya*[27] of the Sarvāstivādins.

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[23] For example, see Dutt, "The Doctrine of *Kāya*," op. cit., p. 518; Reed, op. cit., p. 29; Shastri, op. cit., p. 64; Xing, op. cit., pp. 70-72.

[24] An indication can be seen in Charles Willemen, "Dharma and Dharmas," in *Encyclopedia of Buddhism*, ed. Robert E. Buswell (New York: Macmillan Reference, USA, 2003), p. 219; Dutt, "The Doctrine of *Kāya*," op. cit., p. 523.

[25] For examples of different voices from the mainstream claim, see Reynolds, "The Several Bodies of the Buddha," op. cit., p. 378; Tomomichi Nitta, "The Meaning Of "*Dhammakāya*" In Pāli Buddhism," *Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies* 51, no. 1 (2002): 45-47, 47, note 17; Reynolds and Hallisey, "Buddha," op. cit., p. 1069; David B. Gray, "Mandala of the Self: Embodiment, Practice, and Identity Construction in the Cakrasamvara Tradition," *The Journal of religious history* 30, no. 3 (2006): 294-310, 299, note 22.

[26] The *Mahāvibhāṣā* is the commentary on the Sarvāstivada *Abhidharma* which records also doctrinal points of other early Buddhist schools. It is belived to have been composed by Vasumitra in the first century BC, and is now extant only in Chinese translations.

[27] The *Abhidharmakośa* is a systematic digest of the Sarvāstivāda *Abhidharma*, occupying a similar position to the Theravādin *Visuddhimagga*. It was written in the fifth century CE. The *Bhāṣya* is its auto-commentary, written by the same author and compiled together in the same book.

In the Pali tradition, two renowned commentators who provided main explanations of the term *dhammakāya* are Buddhaghoṣa and Dhammapāla.[28] Of the two, the former interprets the term *dhammakāya* in various ways. In some of his writings, Buddhaghoṣa uses the term *dhammakāya* in the sense of the Buddha's verbal teaching[29] or the teachings and disciplines collected together, i.e., the *dhamma-vinaya* which takes on the role of the teacher after the Buddha's passing.[30] In other works, however, he relates the Buddha's *dhammakāya* with his mental qualities[31] or purity.[32] In a particular passage, he states that a noble disciple can see the Buddha's *dhammakāya* with his eye of wisdom (*paññā-cakkhu*) or supramundane eye (*lokuttara-cakkhu*), following his/her penetration of the noble path (*ariyamagga*).[33] In another passage, he

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[28] Both were commentators around the 5th century CE although Dhammapāla came a little later.

[29] DA.III.865:

> …kasmā tathāgato ''dhammakāyo''ti vutto? Tathāghoughato hi tepiṭakaṃ buddhavacanaṃ hadayena cintetvā vācāya abhinīhari. Tenassa kāyo dhammamayattā dhammova. Iti dhammo kāyo assāti dhammakāyo**.**
>
> Why is the *Tathāgata* designated '*dhammakāya*'? Because he thought of the Buddha's word by heart then brought out by speech. Therefore, his body is *dhamma* as it is made of *dhamma*. Hence, he whose body is *dhamma* is named '*dhammakāya*' (having *dhamma* as body).

Here, Buddhaghoṣa interprets the term *dhamma* when it forms part of the compound word *dhammakāya* as being the Buddha's verbal teachings. Even though the flow of reasoning in this explanation of this *sutta* shows a fair degree of tension, the final grammatical analysis of the term *dhammakāya* effectively renders the term as an adjective. It modifies 'the *Tathāgata*' as being 'the one who has *dhamma* as body,' where '*dhamma'* refers to the Buddha's words.

[30] DA.I.34:

> evaṃ me sutanti vacanena yathāsutaṃ dhammaṃ dassento bhagavato *dhammakāyaṃ* paccakkhaṃ karoti. Tena ''nayidaṃ atikkantasatthukaṃ pāvacanaṃ, ayaṃ vo satthā''ti satthu adassanena ukkaṇṭhitaṃ janaṃ samassāseti.
>
> With the phrase 'thus have I heard,' [the venerable Ānanda] while preaching the *dhamma* as it has been heard, [means he] is demonstrating the *dhammakāya*. With that phrase, he consoles people who lament for not seeing the teacher that 'This word does not have the teacher passed away. This [*dhammakāya*] is your teacher.'

[31] At Vism.I.227, Buddhaghoṣa explains the Buddha's *dhammakāya* as being succeeded or prosperous with treasured qualities (*guṇa-ratana*) such as the body of virtue (*sīlakkhandha*) that is pure in all respects, "*yopi so bhagavā... sabbākāraparisuddha-sīlakkhandhādiguṇaratanasamiddha-dhammakāyo*…."

The 'aggregate of virtue' or *sīlakkhandha* could refer to the first member of either the three, four, or five *dhamma*-aggregates (*dhammakkhandha*s). See D.I.206, D.III.229, and D.III.279 for respective examples of these different enumerations of *dhamma*-aggregates. The five refers to virtue (*sīla*), concentration (*samādhi*), wisdom (*paññā*), release (*vimutti*), and the knowing and seeing of one's own release (*vimuttiñāṇadassana*). The last one and two members are dropped out in the sets of four and three *dhamma*-aggregates respectively. In the Pali canon, these *dhamma*s generally refer to qualities (to be) accomplished.

It may be argued that, being qualities (to be) accomplished, these five *dhamma*s may also be regarded in another aspect as being a set of 'prescribed practices' or the Buddha's 'verbal teachings.' Nevertheless, it is hard to imagine how a practitioner would actually 'practise these *dhamma*s,' as they indeed arise as the 'result of practice,' rather than being the 'practice' itself. Overlooking this fine distinction, a reader may mistake these 'qualities' for 'teachings' in an exclusive sense. Further discussion may be sought in Chapter 2.

[32] Vism.I.204, VinA.I.124, KhpA.108. In these passages, Buddhaghoṣa relates the Buddha's endowment of *dhammakāya* (*dhammakāyasampatti*) with his state of having all hatred destroyed (*bhaggadosatāya*). This connects the term *dhammakāya* with the Buddha's destruction of defilements.

[33] SnA.I.34.

specifies that the *dhammakāya* is to be fully known after the rise of the final noble path - the *arahatta-magga* (the path to Arhatship).[34] At other times, he apparently identifies 'the *dhamma* that is the *Tathāgata*'s body' as the ninefold transcendental *dhamma* (*nava-lokuttara-dhamma*).[35] To summarise, Buddhaghoṣa uses the term *dhammakāya* mostly as a noun. In most of his explanations, he relates *dhammakāya* with the Buddha's purified mental qualities, realities to be attained or experienced spiritually by his noble disciples, through the destruction of defilements**.** In a few instances, he connects the term with the Buddha's collective teachings. In some explanations, however, he employs the term *dhammakāya* as an adjective, qualifying the *Tathāgata* as 'having *dhamma* as body.' In this case, Buddhaghoṣa identifies 'the *dhamma*' either as the ninefold transcendental *dhamma* or as the Buddha's verbal teaching.

Dhammapāla follows Buddhaghoṣa closely in his interpretation of *dhammakāya* as related to the Buddha's qualities.[36] At some points, he explains the historical Buddha as being equal to previous Buddhas who are unequalled by the qualities of both his physical body and *dhamma-body* (*dhammakāya*).[37]

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[34] SnA.II.594.

[35] SA.II.313; SnA.I.34. Here, the term *dhammakāya* is used as an adjective. The *Tathāgata* is designated '*dhammakāya*' (D.III.84) which can be translated as '(He who) has *dhamma* as body.' Thus, in this sense, the *dhamma* is the body of the *Tathāgata*. Buddhaghoṣa identifies 'this *dhamma'* in this expression with the ninefold transcendental *dhamma* (*navavidha lokuttaradhamma*).

Note that the expression 'ninefold transcendent *dhamma'* (*navavidha lokuttaradhamma*) does not occur in the Pali *sutta*s. It is a commentarial expression referring to the 'four transcendental fruits (*phala*s)' along with their 'corresponding paths (*magga*s)' and '*Nibbāna*.' Further discussion on the formulation of the four transcendent paths will be made below, in the second chapter.

[36] At ThrA.I.115 and DṬ.II.201, Dhammapāla follows Buddhaghoṣa that the Buddha's *dhammakāya* is prosperous with treasured qualities such as the overall-pure aggregate of virtue.

At ItA.I.13, ThrA.II.121, CpA.332, UdA.87-88, VvA.213, DṬ.I.130, DṬ.II.4, MṬ,II.51, AṬ.III.76, AṬ.III.216, and AṬ.III.261, he explains that the Buddha's endowment of the body of *dhamma*s which are unthinkable and immeasurable such as the ten powers, four causes of intrepidity, six kinds of unshared knowledges and eighteen exclusive Buddha's qualities is demonstrated by means of referencing to his acquisition of the omniscience that is based on his exhaustion of cankers (*āsavakkhayapadaṭṭhāna-sabbaññutaññāṇādhigama-paridīpanato dasabala-catuvesārajja-chaasādhāraṇañāṇa-aṭṭhārasāveṇikabuddhadhammādi-acinteyyāparimeyyadhammakāyasampatti dīpitā hoti*).

Here, Dhammapāla obviously refers to *dhammakāya* as bodies of those extraordinary qualities connected with the Buddha's mental purity. It may be interesting to note that the qualities enumerated here are similar to those expressed in the Sarvāstivāda tradition, even though the details of the qualities mentioned in both traditions are slightly different. See below for details of Buddha's *dharma*s enumerated in the Sarvāstivāda school.

[37] ItA.II.102, UdA.310:

> Ye pana purimakā sammāsambuddhā sabbasattehi asamā, tehi saddhiṃ ayameva rūpakāyaguṇehi ceva dhammakāyaguṇehi ca samoti asamasamaṭṭhenapi aggo.

In a number of passages, he connects the term *dhammakāya* with the spiritual realisation of a person who is pure-minded[38] or who has fulfilled a certain degree of perfection.[39] He explains the Buddha's *dhammakāya* as that which can be seen through the 'seeing' (*dassana*) of the noble truths.[40] In a few passages, he relates the Buddha's physical body to the compassion and benefit of others, while relating the *dhamma*-body (*dhammakāya*) to wisdom and the Buddha's own benefit.[41] At some points, Dhammapāla even refers to *dhammakāya* as being or becoming 'self.'[42] It is only once that he uses the term

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> This [Buddha] equals previous Buddhas, who are unequalled to all beings, by both the qualities of his physical body and those of his *dhamma*-body (*dhammakāya*). Therefore, he is 'the foremost' for his equality to the unequalled.

[38] ItA.II.115:

> Etena maṃsacakkhunā tathāgatadassanaṃ rūpakāyasamodhānañca akāraṇaṃ, ñāṇacakkhunāva dassanaṃ dhammakāyasamodhānameva ca pamāṇanti dasseti. Tenevāha ''dhammañhi so, bhikkhave, bhikkhu na passati, dhammaṃ apassanto na maṃ passatī''ti. Tattha dhammo nāma navavidho lokuttaradhammo. So ca abhijjhādīhi dūsitacittena na sakkā passituṃ, tasmā dhammassa adassanato dhammakāyañca na passatīti.
>
> With that pharse, it is demonstrated that encountering and seeing the Buddha's physical body with the eye of flesh is not the point. What matters is seeing, with the eye of wisdom, and encountering his *dhamma*-body (*dhammakāya*). Thus the Buddha said, "*Bhikkhu*s, a *bhikkhu* does not see the *dhamma*. While not seeing the *dhamma*, he does not see me." In that speech, the ninefold transcendental *dhamma* is called 'the *dhamma*.' A person whose mind is defiled by cankers such as covetousness is not able to see the *dhamma*. And because of not seeing the *dhamma*, he does not see the *dhamma*-bodied (the *Tathāgata*).

From the flow of reasoning in this explanation, it is likely that Dhammapāla uses the term *dhammakāya* in the last sentence to refer to the Buddha or *Tathāgata* who has *dhamma* as body. He elaborates 'the *dhamma'* as 'the ninefold transcendental *dhamma'* and connects it to the body of the *Tathāgata*. In other words, the ninefold transcendental *dhamma* is the *Tathāgata*'s body which cannot be seen by the person who is ill-minded.

[39] ThrA.I.37:

> …tathāgato (tathāgatā) attano dhammakāyassa dūre ṭhitānaṃ akatādhikārānaṃ paññāpajjotena mohandhakāraṃ vidhamitvā kāyavisamādisamavisamaṃ vibhāvento ālokadā bhavanti, āsanne ṭhitānaṃ pana katādhikārānaṃ dhammacakkhuṃ uppādento cakkhudadā bhavanti.
>
> The *Tathāgata*s, having destroyed the darkness of delusion with the light of wisdom for those whose perfection has not been fulfilled, who stay far from their *dhammakāya*, while demonstrating the equalities and inequalities such as physical inequality, are [entitled] the 'light givers.' But when giving rise to the 'eye of *dhamma*' (*dhammacakkhu*) to those whose perfection has been fulfilled, who stay near, they are [entitled] the 'eye givers.'

Here, Dhammapāla refers to people whose perfection have not been fulfilled (*akarādhikāra*) as those who stay far from *dhammakāya*, while those whose perfection have been fulfilled are said to stay close and can be enlightened. Again, the term *dhammakāya* is related to spiritual realisation of noble disciples and the rise of their 'eye of *dhamma*' (*dhammacakkhu*).

[40] UdA.310, ThriA.28:

> Ariyasaccadassanena hi bhagavato dhammakāyo diṭṭho nāma hoti.
>
> Through the seeing (*dassana*) of the noble truths, the Buddha's *dhammakāya* is seen.

[41] MṬ.I.46-7, AṬ.I.40. The connection of the term *dhammakāya* to the Buddha's own benefit, rather than to others' benefit, indicates its relation to the Buddha's spiritual realisation or enlightenment rather than to his teachings.

[42] At CpA.332 and DṬ.I.86, Dhammapāla provides various explanations of the *bodhisatta* as being the highest (*parama*). An explanation refers to the term *dhammakāya* (*paraṃ vā attabhūtato dhammakāyato aññaṃ paṭipakkhaṃ vā tadanatthakaraṃ kilesacoragaṇaṃ mināti hiṃsatīti paramo, mahāsatto.*). Herein, the *bodhisatta* is said to be the highest because he defeats the enemy or the opponent which is the other from the *dhamma*-body (*dhammakāya*) that is the self. In other words, he overcomes the group of robbers or cankers that endanger the (attainment of) *dhammakāya* which is the self.

The expression regarding *dhammakāya* as being 'self' reminds us of some of Sarvāstivādin's explanations on the *dharmakāya*. Cf. p.12 and note 66. Further discussion may be found in chapter 3, on the meanings of '*kāya*.'

dhammakāya in the sense which may be interpreted as 'teaching.'[43] In one passage, he also employs the term *dhammakāya* as an adjective, referring to the ninefold transcendental *dhamma* (*nava-lokuttara-dhamma*) as being the *Tathāgata*s' nature or their 'body.' In other words, the ninefold transcendent *dhamma* is 'the *dhamma* that all *Tathāgata*s have attained and have become.'[44] In short, like Buddhaghoṣa, Dhammapāla employs the term *dhammakāya* mostly as a noun, and relates it with the Buddha's mental qualities and purity, and with the enlightenment either of the Buddha or his noble disciples. As an adjective, he identifies 'the *dhamma* that is the *Tathāgata*s' *kāya* specifically as the ninefold transcendental *dhamma* (*nava-lokuttara-dhamma*).

Other than the above two commentators, Upasena and Buddhadatta are also Pali commentators who lived around the same times.[45] Upasena agrees with Buddhaghoṣa in regard to his interpretations of *dhammakāya* as related to the Buddha's qualities or spiritual attainment.[46] None of Upasena's writings interprets the term *dhammakāya* in the sense of 'teaching.' Likewise, Buddhadatta differentiates *dhammakāya* or *dhamma-body* from the Buddha's physical body (*rūpakāya*).[47] He expresses the beauty of the Buddha by means of the properties (*guṇa*) of both his physical body and his *dhamma*-body.[48]

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[43] DṬ.I.449:

> Evarūpassāti sammāsambuddhattā aviparītadhammadesanatāya evaṃpākaṭadhammakāyassa satthu.
>
> The Buddha is said to have the *dhamma*-body (*dhammakāya*) revealed as such because of his preaching of true (correct/precise) *dhamma*, due to his being the perfectly self-enlightened one (*sammāsambuddha*).

In this passage, the term *dhammakāya* may refer either to 'the Buddha's teachings collected together,' or more likely to 'the truth' that can be expressed by the preaching of true *dhamma*.

[44] In his explanation of the term *dhammabhūta* (having become *dhamma*) at ThrA.II.205, Dhammapāla elaborates it as follows:

> Dhammabhūtehīti dhammakāyatāya dhammasabhāvehi, navalokuttaradhammato vā bhūtehi jātehi, dhammaṃ vā pattehi.
>
> Having become *dhamma* means to have *dhamma* as their nature, for they (Buddhas) have the *dhamma* as body(ies). This means they have become, or have been born by, the ninefold transcendental *dhamma*. In other words, they have attained the *dhamma*.

From this passage, Dhammapāla connects the Buddhas' *dhammakāya* with the ninefold transcendental *dhamma* and the Buddhas' attainment of the *dhamma*. It is obvious from his explanation that the term *dhamma* refers to reality that can be attained or spiritually realised or experienced.

[45] Approximately 5th century CE.

[46] For Upasena's work, see Nd1A.II.265 (cf. VinA.I.124, Vism.I.204), Nd2A.31-32 (cf. SnA.II.594).

[47] AbhAv.I.241:

Later in the 11th to 12th century CE, two commentators of the Pali *Vinaya* differ slightly in their interpretations of *dhammakāya*. Vajirabuddhi usually interprets the term *dhammakāya* in the sense of Buddha's teaching or *dhamma-vinaya* that takes the role of the teacher after the Buddha's passing,[49] while Sāriputta prefers to relate the term *dhammakāya* with the Buddha's enlightenment[50] or to identify it with the Buddha's qualities (*buddhaguṇa*)[51] and as that which can be seen through the disciples' spiritual attainment.[52] In a few passages, however, Sāriputta also refers to the term *dhammakāya* in the sense of the Buddha's teaching.[53]

An additional reference to *dhammakāya* which may be regarded as presented from the Theravāda viewpoint is the Pali *Milindapañha*. Even though this text is known to have originated at an early date in the northwest of India and is generally regarded as representing the Buddhist thought of the pre-sectarian period,[54] a comparative study of its Chinese and Pali versions[55] reveals particular Theravādin characteristics in the present form of the Pali version which cannot be found in the Chinese version. These include the mention of seven titles of Theravādin *Abhidhamma* texts, from the *Dhammasaṅganī* to the *Paṭṭhāna*, studied and preached by the elder Nāgasena, and the narrated origin

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Tattha satthari kaṅkhanto tassa rūpakāyadhammakāyānaṃ vijjamānataṃ, avijjamānatañca kaṅkhati

Among the three gems, a person while doubting in the teacher (Buddha), would doubt in the existence and non-existence of his physical body and *dhamma*-body.

Buddhadatta's *Abhidhammāvatāra* may be regarded either as an introductory summary or as one of the oldest sub-commentaries (*ṭīkā*) on the Pali *abhidhamma*.

48 AbhAv.II.106-7.

49 VjB.15, VjB.19.

50 At SrD.I.211, the Buddha is said to have been born twice; first by his physical body at the Lumbinī forest, and later by his *dhamma*-body (*dhammakāya*) under the *bodhi* tree. Here, Sāriputta further connects the Buddha's birth through his physical body with compassion (*karuṇā*) and other people's benefit, and his birth through the *dhammakāya* with equanimity (*upekkhā*) and the Buddha's own benefit.

51 SrD.I.310-311; SrD.I.352.

52 SrD.III.299.

53 SrD.II.166-7; SrD.I.126.

54 See, for example, Bhikkhu Bodhi, "Introduction," in *The Questions of King Milinda: An Abridgement of the Milindapañha*, ed. N. K. G. Mendis (Kandy, Sri Lanka: Buddhist Publication Society, 1993), pp. 1-3.

55 For details, see Bhikkhu Thich Minh Chau. "Milindapañhā and Nāgasenabhikshusūtra: A Comparative Study through Pāli and Chinese Sources." Last updated 01/06/2005. URL: "http://www.buddhanet.net/budsas/ebud/milinda/ml-00.htm; http://www.budsas.org/ebud/milinda/ml-01.htm; http://www.buddhanet.net/budsas/ebud/milinda/ml-02.htm; http://www.buddhanet.net/budsas/ebud/milinda/ml-03.htm." Date of access: 13/07/2007.

of the elder Nāgasena which resembles that of the elder Moggallīputta Tissa.[56] More importantly, the reference to the term *dhammakāya* is found only in the Pali version, and is absent from the Chinese version.[57] Herein, the term *dhammakāya* is referred to in the sense of the Buddha's teaching.[58]

On the whole, traditional Theravādins interpret the term *dhammakāya* mostly in the sense of the Buddha's qualities or realities to be realised or attained spiritually. The term is related to the Buddha's mental purity or to the enlightenment of either the Buddha or his disciples. In a few instances, however, the term is interpreted as the collected Buddha's teaching which takes on the role of the master after his *parinibbāna*. When used as an adjective, it iss used in the sense of either the ninefold transcendental *dhamma* (*nava-lokuttara-dhamma*) or the Buddha's verbal teaching.

Traditional Sarvāstivādins interpret the term *dharmakāya* in a similar way,[59] while being slightly more specific in relating it to the enlightenment either of the Buddha or his disciples. For example, the *Mahāvibhāṣā* explicates the manner in which a Buddhist would take refuge in the Buddha, that he/she would take refuge in 'the *dharma*(s)' that makes a person 'a Buddha,'[60] rather than in his physical body. This '*dharma*' is referred to as '*dharmakāya*.'[61] This point is mentioned also in Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośa Bhāṣya*:

> He who takes Refuge in the Buddha takes refuge in the *dharmas* of the Arhat which form a Buddha, the *dharmas* which are the causes of the designation "Buddha," that is,

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[56] For further details, see ibid, particularly Part I: "II. Points of Difference," "III. The School or Sect to Which the P and the C Versions Belong," and "IV. A Probe into the Anteriority and Fidelity of the P and C Versions."

[57] Ibid. See particularly Part II: "Book III.Vimaticchedanapañho, Chapter 5: 9. The Buddha after his Parinirvāna cannot be pointed out."

[58] Ibid. Cf. I. B. Horner, *Milinda's Questions*, 2 vols., Sacred Books of the Buddhists (London: Luzac, 1964), p. 100.

[59] A detailed discussion on the term *dhammakāya* in the Sarvāstivāda tradition can be found in Makransky, *Buddhahood Embodied*, op. cit., pp. 23-28.

[60] This refers to the *dhamma*(s) that transforms a *Bodhisattva* to a Buddha - the *dhamma*(s) that may be collectively called 'Buddhahood.'

[61] Pruden, op. cit., vol. 2,, p. 722, n. 129, referring to the *Mahāvibhāṣā*, TD27, p. 177a16: "…the Refuge is the Aśaikṣa *dharmas* of the Buddha which form Bodhi, the *dharmakāya*." Cf. Makransky, *Buddhahood Embodied*, op. cit., p. 23 referring to Louis de La Vallée Poussin, "Documents d'Abhidharma 2. La Doctrine des Refuges," in *Melanges Chinois et Bouddhiques* (1931-32): 65-109, 75: "The refuge is the Buddha's fully accomplished qualities (*aśaikṣa dharmāḥ*) which comprise enlightenment (*bodhi*), i.e., [his], body of dharma(s) (*dharmakāya*)."

See also Pruden, op. cit., vol. 2,, p. 722, n. 131 which relates this to AbhK.VII.34.

> the *dharmas* by reason of which, as principle cause, a certain person is called a Buddha; or rather the *dharmas* by the acquisition of which a certain person, understanding all things, is called a Buddha. These *dharmas* are the Knowledge of Extinction *(kṣayajñāna)*, the Knowledge of Nonarising *(anutpādajñāna)* and Right Views *(Samyagdṛṣṭi)* (vi.50, 67) with the *dharmas* which accompany these *jñānas*, that is, with the five pure *skandhas*.[62]

This expression clearly demonstrates that the Buddha refuge refers to the accomplished qualities, as enumerated in the above quoted passage, that transform a person into the all-knowing Buddha.

At another point of the *Abhidharmakośa*, Vasubandhu mentions the equality and un-equality of all Buddhas. He explains that all Buddhas are identical for their realisation of the same *dharmakāya*.[63] Hence, the term *dharmakāya* represents some kind of reality to be realised by all Buddhas. The *Vyākhyā*[64] interprets this aspect of *dharmakāya* as 'a series of undefiled *dharma*s,' (*anāsravadharma-saṃtāna*)[65] or 'a renewal' of the 'psycho-physical organism, the personality' (*āśraya parivṛtti*) belonging to either the Buddha or an Arhat.[66] Thus, to the Sarvāstivādins, the term *dharmakāya* is related mainly to the Buddha's enlightenment, being the reality which he attained or realised spiritually and the attainment of which transformed him from a *Bodhisattva* to a Buddha. However, in some aspects, the term is related also to an Arhat.

Comparing the views of two main Buddhist traditions, it may be concluded that both of them interpret the term *dhammakāya*/*dharmakāya* mostly in the same way, with only small differences. That is to say, while the Sarvāstivādins are

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62 AbhK.IV.32; Vasubandhu, Louis De La Vallée Poussin, and Leo M. Pruden, *Abhidharmakośa Bhāṣyam*, 4 vols., vol. 4 (Berkeley, Calif: Asian Humanities Press, 1988), p.601. These *dharmas* are said to be possessed also by other Arhats. Ibid., p. 991; AbhK.VI.50. But they are distinguished as "Śrāvaka Bodhi, Pratyekabuddha Bodhi, and Unsurpassed, Perfect Bodhi." Vasubandhu, Poussin, and Pruden, *Abhidharmakośa Bhāṣyam*, op. cit., p. 1023: AbhK.VI.67a-b. The qualities unique for the Buddha are explained in AbhK.VII.28; Vasubandhu, Poussin, and Pruden, *Abhidharmakośa Bhāṣyam*, op. cit., p. 1137.

Cf. note 36 for similar expression in the Theravāda tradition.

63 AbhK.VII.34; Vasubandhu, Louis De La Vallée Poussin, and Leo M. Pruden, *Abhidharmakośa Bhāṣyam*, 4 vols., vol. 4 (Berkeley, Calif: Asian Humanities Press, 1988), p.1145.

64 *Sphuṭārthā abhidharmakośavyākhyā*, written by Yaśomitra, is an exegesis on Vasubandhu's *Kośa*.

65 This aspect of *dharmakāya* is related to AbhK.IV.32.

66 Vasubandhu, Poussin, and Pruden, *Abhidharmakośa Bhāṣyam*, op. cit., p. 1200, note 196. For further explanation on 'the renewal of personality,' see Ibid. p. 631. Dutt also mentions this explanation of the *dharmakāya* in the Sarvāstivādin view. See Dutt, "The Doctrine of *Kāya*," op. cit., p. 527.

more specific in connecting the term with the Buddha's or his disciples' enlightenment, the Theravādins connect it either with the enlightenment of the Buddha and his disciples, or, to a minority, with the Buddha's teaching. Besides, while the Sarvāstivādins refer to the whole term *dharmakāya* specifically as a noun, the Theravādins sometimes also refer to the term as an adjective, conveying a meaning that the *Tathāgata*s has 'the *dhamma*' as their 'body,' where 'the *dhamma*' refers to either the ninefold transcendent *dhamma* (*nava-lokuttara-dhamma*) or to his verbal teachings.

In what follows, we shall turn to observe contemporary academic studies in regard to their interpretations of *dhammakāya* in early Buddhist usages.

Contemporary Interpretations of Early Buddhist *Dhammakāya*

Contemporary academic interpretations of early Buddhist *dhammakāya* are found mostly in scholarly works discussing Mahāyāna conceptions of the Buddha's bodies. Even though those studies cover the area of the three bodies (*Trikāya*) of the Buddha according to Mahāyāna philosophy, the review in this section concerns only interpretations of *dhammakāya* in early Buddhist usage which is the main focus of our present study.

Previous researchers generally interpret early Buddhist *dhammakāya* according to the term's presence in three textual sources: the Pali canon, the Sarvāstivāda *Abhidharma* treatises and the Chinese *Āgama*s. The main source employed by all interpreters as being the best representative of early Buddhist thought is the Theravāda Pali canon. Some works refers also to Sarvāstivādin *Abhidharma* treatises - mainly the *Mahāvibhāṣā* as well as the *Abhidharmakośa* and its *bhāṣya* - to present a later formulated traditional understanding of the term.[67] This Sarvāstivādin idea, along with that of the Mahāsāṃghikas, are usually taken as being the origin of Mahāyāna's further developed ideas about the Buddha's three bodies. In recent works, the use of the Chinese *Āgama*s as an

[67] For example, see Dutt, "The Doctrine of *Kāya*," op. cit.; Reed, op. cit.; Xing, op. cit. An exception is Williams, *Mahāyāna Buddhism*, op. cit., p. 171, wherein the author takes the Sarvāstivādin interpretation as an early idea regarding *dharmakāya*.

alternative or additional source of early Buddhist teachings has gained increasing popularity. In doing so, researchers have rightly recommended cautious use of this source, either for its possibly non-literal translation or for the possible influence of Mahāyāna thought on the Chinese translation of texts.[68]

Previous scholars interpret early Buddhist *dhammakāya* in a few different ways. The majority claim that the term was used merely in the sense of 'the Buddha's teachings collected together.'[69] In claiming so, researchers mostly refer to a few canonical passages where the Buddha appears to equate himself with *dhamma*. The first passage frequently mentioned is located in the *Aggañña-sutta* where the term *dhammakāya*, along with three other terms,[70] are said to designate the *Tathāgata*.[71] The second is a passage in the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* where the Buddha is said to say that the teaching taught and the discipline laid down by him (*dhamma-vinaya*) would be the future teacher after his passing.[72] The third passage is the Buddha's discourse delivered to the elder Vakkali which states that it is useless to long to see the Buddha's corruptible physical body, for he who sees the *dhamma* sees the Buddha and he who sees the Buddha sees the *dhamma*.[73]

It may be noted here that, of the three, only the first passage actually contains the term '*dhammakāya*;' while the other two mention only the term '*dhamma*.' In other words, most references from which some previous works interpreted the term *dhammakāya* as being the Buddha's teachings are indeed references to the term '*dhamma*,' rather than to the term '*dhammakāya*' *per se*.[74] It is

[68] For example, see Harrison, op. cit., p. 54; Xing, op. cit., p. 74.

[69] For example, see Dutt, "The Doctrine of *Kāya*," op. cit.; Reed, op. cit., pp. 28-29; Xing, op. cit., p. 74. This interpretation agrees with the minority of the Theravādin voice.

[70] The three terms are *dhammabhūta*, *brahmakāya*, and *brahmabhūta*.

[71] D.III.84.

[72] D.II.154.

[73] S.III.120.

[74] This might be regarded as a problem of generalisation or perhaps confusion between the term *dhamma* and *dhammakāya*. It may be argued that, in some instances, the term *dhamma* could be used also in the same context as the term *dhammakāya*.

probable that the identification of *dhammakāya* with '*dhamma* in the sense of teaching,' which has become a common practice in many previous works, was influenced by some of Buddhaghoṣa's explanations, reinforced with researchers' preferred style of interpretation, as is evident in their writings.

An early example is Dutt's pioneering study on conceptions of Buddha's *kāya*s.[75] He quotes the three Pali passages listed above, and another *Aṅguttara-nikāya* passage in which the Buddha said that he is neither god nor human but a Buddha,[76] and identifies all these passages as expressions that probably lead the way to the later developed 'non-realistic' conception of a 'superhuman Buddha.' He notes also that these passages themselves do not bear the metaphysical sense he takes to be non-realistic.[77] In quoting the first three Pali passages, Dutt translates the term '*dhamma'* in all instances as 'his (the Buddha's) doctrine.' Later, he cites a discussion in the *Kathāvatthu*, which denies the concept of a superhuman Buddha held by the '*Vetulyaka*s,'[78] to confirm that the Theravāda standpoint on the issue (as present in the *Kathāvatthu*) still resembles that of the 'early Hīnayānists' (as seen in the Pali *Nikāya*s).[79] Afterwards, he quotes a passage from Buddhaghoṣa's *Visuddhi-magga*,[80] wherein the Buddha's *dhammakāya* is said to be glorified with treasured qualities such as the aggregate of virtue (*sīlakkhandha*) and so on, to

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Nevertheless, without beginning from an early understanding of the term *dhammakāya* itself, it is hard to assume that the term *dhamma* in *all* the above passages equally represents the conception of the term *dhammakāya* in early Buddhist thought, given the well known fact that the term *dhamma* changes its meaning according to the different contexts provided by particular Pali passages. For detailed studies on various meanings of the Pali term *dhamma*, see Magdalene und Wilhelm Geiger, *Pali Dhamma, Vornehmlich in Der Kanonischen Literatur*, Abhandlungen Der Bayerischen Akademie Der Wissenschaften. Philosophisch-Philologische Und Historische Klasse; 31, Bd.1., 1 Abh. (Amsterdam: Harrassowitz, 1920); John Ross Carter, *Dhamma: Western Academic and Sinhalese Buddhist Interpretations, a Study of a Religious Concept* (Tokyo: Hokuseido Press, 1978).

Even though Buddhaghoṣa, at DA.I.34, relates the term *dhammakāya* with the *dhamma-vinaya* of the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* passage, his explanation should be regarded as representing the 'Theravādin view' on the term in its early usage, rather than being 'the view of the early Buddhists.' Also, as mentioned earlier, indeed Buddhaghoṣa refers to the term *dhammakāya* even more frequently in the sense of Buddha's qualities or relates it to the spiritual attainment of both the Buddha and his disciples.

[75] Nalinaksha Dutt, "The Doctrine of *Kāya*," op. cit.

[76] A.II.38.

[77] Ibid., p. 520.

[78] This Pali term is used in the sense of 'ones who adopt a heretical view.' It generally refers to either members of other early Buddhist schools or those of the Abhayagiri monastery of the Theravāda school.

[79] Ibid., p. 523.

[80] Vism.I.234. Cf. note 31.

support that the *kāya* conception of the Theravādins remains the same. He then makes the following conclusion:

> In short, the early Hīnayānists conceived Buddha's rūpakāya as that of a human being, and his dhammakāya as the collection of his dhammas, i.e., doctrines and disciplinary rules collectively.[81]

In this way, Dutt equates *dhammakāya*, which is explained at Vism.I.234 as being glorified with treasured qualities (*guṇaratana*), with the *dhamma-vinaya*, which is mentioned in the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* as that which will be the future teacher after the Buddha's *parinibbāna*. He then concludes that the early Buddhists understood the term *dhammakāya* as being the Buddha's collected verbal teachings.

A number of later works have followed the same lines of this interpretation of *dhammakāya* in early Buddhist thought.[82] Reed, for example, cites the above mentioned three Pali passages and suggests that they perform a twofold function which serve as a basis for the later two-body formula. On the one hand, they equate 'the role' of *dhamma* with that of the Buddha. On the other hand, they distinguish the Buddha's physical body from his *dhamma*. She thus concludes:

> In all these passages from the *Nikāyas* the only conception of the *dharmakāya* of the Buddha is as the body of doctrines which were taught by the Buddha."[83]

Likewise, Shastri, in his study of Asaṅga's writing regarding a principal Mahāyāna teaching, refers to the above Pali passages by briefly expressing his view that the term *dhammakāya* had no metaphysical significance in early Buddhist usage.[84]

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[81] Nalinaksha Dutt, "The Doctrine of *Kāya*," op. cit., p. 523.

[82] While Dutt's primary concern on quoting the above mentioned Pali passages was to demonstrate early expressions that might have lent support to later development of the idea of 'superhuman Buddha' as theorised at a later time, some later works have taken those passages as being references to the term *dhammakāya*.

[83] Reed, op. cit., p. 29. In so concluding, Reed refers to the above three passages as being references to the term *dhammakāya*. Besides, she translates the term *dhammaja*, meaning 'born of *dhamma*,' in the *Aggañña-sutta* as 'born of his (the Buddha) *dhammakāya*' (p. 28).

[84] Shastri, op. cit., p. 64. Cf. Dutt, *Mahayana Buddhism*, op. cit., pp. 136, 146.

Xing, in his study regarding the origin and development of the *Trikāya*-theory, states that *dhammakāya* in early Buddhism meant the 'Buddhist teaching in general.'[85] His conclusion is based on the same four Pali passages utilised in Dutt's work and four Chinese translations of the *Mahā-parinirvāṇa-sūtra*, which correspond to the Pali *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta*.[86]

Kajiyama, on referring to Lancaster's study of the term *dharmakāya* in the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā-Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra*, notes that the expression of *dharmakāya* as a 'collection of Buddha's *sūtra*s' agrees with its meaning in early Buddhism as Dutt has discussed.[87] Here, Kajiyama simply refers to Dutt's conclusion regarding the early Buddhist view on the meaning of *dhammakāya*.

Gombrich similarly interprets the term *dhammakāya* in the *Aggañña-sutta* as an indication that the Buddha's true import is due to 'his teaching,' not his personality. He refers to the Buddha's reminder delivered to the elder Vakkali, in the above mentioned *Saṃyutta-nikāya* passage, to confirm this point.[88]

Makransky, on referring to the term *dhammakāya* as 'the collection (*kāya*) of Buddha's excellent qualities (*anāsravadharmāḥ*)' as etymologised in Yogācāra commentaries, mentions briefly that some pre-Mahāyāna and early Mahāyāna texts *also* refers to the term *dhammakāya* as 'collection of the Buddha's teachings.'[89] While it is not mentioned directly, it is probable that his reference to 'pre-Mahāyāna texts' refers to the Pali *Nikāya*s.

Prince, while suggesting that the *dhamma* which the Buddha has become[90] refers to *nibbāna*, interprets the term *dhamma* and *dhammakāya* in the above

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[85] Xing, op. cit., pp. 35-36.

[86] Different Chinese translations bear slightly different titles: *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*, *Buddhaparinirvāṇa-sūtra*, and *Parinirvāṇa-sūtra*. Ibid, pp. 69-70. Note that, like in the Pali *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta*, those Chinese parallels mention only the term *dhammavinaya*, not *dhammakāya*.

[87] Kajiyama, op. cit., p. 14, referring to Lewis Rosser Lancaster, "The Oldest Mahayana Sūtra: Its Significance for the Study of Buddhist Development," *Eastern buddhist* 8, no. 1 (1975): 30-41, No page number is provided.

[88] Richard Gombrich, "The Buddha's Book of Genesis," *Indo-Iranian Journal* 35 (1992): 159-178, 165.

[89] Makransky, *Buddhahood Embodied*, op. cit., p. 5.

[90] This refers to the *Tathāgata*'s designation '*dhammabhūta*,' meaning 'having become *dhamma*,' found in the *Aggañña-sutta*. D.III.84.

mentioned three Pali passages as ‘truth to be communicated,’[91] that is, ‘the teaching that the Buddha has taught.’

Harrison, referring to the *Aggañña-sutta* as being the sole Pali reference to the term *dhammakāya*, proposes that it is to be translated as an adjective, ‘*dhamma*-bodied’ or ‘having *dhamma* as body.’ He takes this to be an expression that equates the Buddha and his *dhamma*. The same is said for the other two passages: the Buddha’s discourse to the elder Vakkali and the passage in the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta*, as cited in most of the above scholarly works.[92] Subsequently, on referring to a discussion in the sanskrit *Karma-vibhaṅgopadeśa* which explicitly equates a similar Indic term ‘*dharma-śarīra*’ with the Buddha’s teaching that should be heard or realised, he comments that “The theme of the text, then, is similar to that of the *Aggañña-sutta*, viz., that the *dharma* in the sense of the teaching is the true body (and in this case “relic”) of the Buddha....”[93] It is, therefore, clear that Harrison interprets the term *dhamma* which constitutes part of the Pali term *dhammakāya*, which is found in the *Aggañña-sutta*, as the Buddha’s teaching. Similarly, in his investigation of the term in the Chinese *Āgama*s, Harrison notes that the term *dharmakāya* (*fa-shen*) is used in this set of texts as a substantive. It bears the meaning of the ‘teaching’ taught by the Buddha or the ‘true *dharma*’ which Harrison differentiates as the Buddha’s ‘Teaching.’[94] While providing a variety of interpretations of the term *dhammakāya*/ *dharmakāya*, it appears that a focal point of Harrison’s argument was to refute the interpretations of the term’s last component, *kāya*, as any kind of ‘body.’ Indeed, it appears that his primary concern is to refute Mahāyāna conceptions on the term *kāya* as being the cosmic or absolute body which some writers have taken to compare with ‘the

[91] A.J. Prince, "The Conception of Buddhahood in Earlier and Later Buddhism," The Journal of the Oriental Society of Australia 7, no. 1-2 (1970): 87-118, 93.

[92] Harrison, op. cit., p. 50.

[93] Ibid., p. 54.

[94] It is plausible that his differentiation of ‘teaching’ and ‘Teaching’ could be to differentiate the Buddha’s verbal teaching (teaching) from the ‘reality’ (Teaching) that the Buddha realised and that from which his teachings originated. However, as he did not mention so, it is uncertain whether such was his intention.

Christian idea of Godhead.'[95] Nevertheless, his strong aversion to those interpretations[96] could have prevented him from attempting to interpret the term further in a different direction, even though the surrounding context of the term may allow such alternative interpretations. According to Harrison, no matter in which form the term appears, the emphasis must be put on its first component - *dhamma* only, not on its last component - *kāya*.

While many previous scholars interpret the term *dhammakāya/dharmakāya* in early Buddhist thought as a reference to the Buddha's teaching, a number of scholars have suggested otherwise. An example is Harvey**:** in his writing on the nature of the *Tathāgata*,[97] he interprets the '*dhamma'* which the *Tathāgata* has become,[98] and the *dhamma* upon seeing which the practitioner sees the Buddha,[99] as '*nibbāna*.'[100] In interpreting the term *dhammakāya* in the same passage, he suggests either that the *Tathāgata* is the body of *dhamma* which is *nibbāna*,[101] or that the '*dhamma'* as the noble eightfold path is the *Tathāgata*'s body.[102]

Reynolds, in his article regarding bodies of the Buddha in later developed Theravāda tradition, does not express explicitly about his opinion on the early Buddhist *dhammakāya*. Nevertheless, it is likely that he disagrees with the interpretation of early Buddhist *dhammakāya* as being verbal teachings,

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[95] Ibid., p. 44.

It is perhaps as Need rightly states that "The main thought Harrison wishes to refute is the notion that the Mahāyāna texts introduce *dharmakāya* as a transcendent body." David Norton Need, "Rendering the Body: Etherealization and Sense in Vedic and Early Buddhist Religiosity" (Ph.D., University of Virginia, 2004), p. 374.

[96] This may be noticed from his expression, in which previous scholarly interpretations of *dhammakāya* in Mahayana texts as some kind of transcendental 'body' or an actual body of the Buddha are considered 'ill defined' (p. 76), a 'figment of the modern Buddhological imagination' (p. 75), or a 'reification of the nonexistent' which is considered 'a cardinal sin' (p. 74).

[97] Peter Harvey, "The Nature of the *Tathāgata*," in *Buddhist Studies: Ancient and Modern*, ed. Philip Denwood and A. M. Piatigorsky, *Collected Papers on South Asia, No.* 4. (London: Curzon Press, 1983), pp. 35-52; Peter Harvey, *The Selfless Mind: Personality, Consciousness and Nirvāṇa in Early Buddhism* (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon, 1995).

[98] D.III.84. Here, the Buddha is entitled '*dhammabhūta*,' meaning 'having become *dhamma*.'

[99] S.III.120.

[100] Harvey, "The Nature of the *Tathāgata*," op. cit., pp. 43-45; Harvey, *The Selfless Mind*, op. cit., pp. 232-234. At this point, Prince shares the same view with that of Harvey for his interpretation of the first passage, but differs from that of the second passage, as mentioned earlier. Cf. Prince, op. cit. p. 93.

[101] Harvey, "The Nature of the *Tathāgata*," op. cit., p. 44-45.

[102] Harvey, *The Selfless Mind*, op. cit., p. 234.

claiming such an idea to have been developed at a later date. For example, in his discussion of a reference to the term *dhammakāya* in the Pali *Milindapañha*, he made the following note:

> As we shall see, the term *dhammakāya* was already in use in the canon. However in the later context it is clear that *dhammakāya* is being identified with the scriptural legacy.[103]

Besides, in his concluding comments, he suggests a serious differentiation between the two-body conception in which the *dhammakāya* is identified with scriptural legacy and the more soteriologically important conception on the Buddha's *kāya*s. In other words, a serious differentiation must be made between the *dhamma* as scripture and the *dhamma* as path and realisation, in order to fully understand the Theravādin conceptions of the Buddha's bodies which can be regarded as traditional scholarly interpretations of the early Buddhist *dhammakāya*.[104]

Nitta, while reluctant to ascribe any meaning to the early Buddhist *dhammakāya*, similarly expresses a disagreement towards the claim that the original meaning of *dhammakāya* is exclusively a 'collection of the teachings.'[105] He notes further that, even though the term has encountered a series of changes of meanings in the Pali commentarial tradition, it has consistently been employed to express the Buddha's essence.[106]

Gray, in his study of the mandala of self in a tantric tradition, suggests two different senses of the term *dhammakāya*/*dhammakāya* in its original usage. He states briefly that "the term *dharmakāya* originally referred to the collection of the Buddha's teachings or his enlightening qualities." [107] Afterwards, he mentions the metaphysical sense of the term as found in some early Buddhist

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[103] Frank E Reynolds, "The Several Bodies of the Buddha: Reflections on a Neglected Aspect of Theravada Tradition," *History of Religion* 16 (1976): 374-389, 376 n. 6.

[104] Ibid., p. 387-388.

[105] Nitta, op. cit., p. 47.

[106] Ibid., p. 47, note 17.

[107] Gray, op. cit., p. 298.

texts: "Although some early Buddhist conceptions of the *dharmakāya* appears to have been metaphysical in nature, later Yogācāra and Madhyamaka thinkers tended to interpret it in an epistemological sense."[108]

On the whole, contemporary academics refer to the term *dhammakāya* in early Buddhism either as a noun or an adjective. As a noun, the term is interpreted mostly as the Buddha's teachings collected together, the *dhammavinaya* that takes the role of the teacher. A few scholars have suggested otherwise, even though most of them do not clearly express an opinion as to what the early Buddhist *dhammakāya* refers to. As an adjective, the term's first component '*dhamma*' is mostly interpreted, again, in the sense of the Buddha's teaching collected together. An exception is its interpretation as the noble eightfold path, as Harvey suggests**.**

From the above scholarly interpretations of early Buddhist *dhammakāya*, a number of omissions have been identified as more suitable for further research First, traditional views mostly do not give detailed discussion as to how the interpretations being proposed have been arrived at. The same holds true for contemporary academic views, with a few exceptions. Secondly, most contemporary academic interpretations of the term in Pali passages are based on a pre-identification of *dhamma,* in the sense of teaching, as being *dhammakāya*,[109] while other references to the term *dhammakāya* in early Buddhist texts have been ignored.[110] Thirdly, different opinions have been posted to the term's first component, *dhamma*. But its last component, *kāya*, has been mostly neglected. Fourthly, even though its interpretation in the sense of teaching is understood as having been established as the mainstream academic thought, sufficient support has not been provided over that of the alternative suggestions. In other words, it seems that the mainstream conclusion

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[108] Ibid., p. 299, note 22.

[109] See note 74.

[110] There are other references to the term *dhammakāya* in the Pali canon, as well as other Chinese *Āgama* references on the term *dharmakāya* (fa-shen), which have not been mentioned in any of the above scholarly works.

was acquired mostly on just a glance, without a detailed analysis of the Pali passage.

In accordance with these omissions, the present study proposes the following research with the following aims and scope.

Aims and Scope of the Study

This work aims to re-examine the meaning(s) of the term *dhammakāya* in early Buddhist thought, in order to fill in part of the lacunae presented above. It investigates the ways in which the term *dhammakāya* was used, along with its meanings and characteristics, as they are evident in the early Buddhist canon. This is done in relation to three specific questions:

1) How should the term *dhammakāya* in early Buddhism be (re-) interpreted?

2) Does it possess any import in early Buddhist thought?

3) Can its latter component, *kāya*, be disregarded?

In order to resolve these questions, this work offers a documentation of all occurrences of the term as it is found in early Buddhist canonical sources. Certain neglected points will be drawn from the cited passages in order to explore further implications of the early Buddhist *dhammakāya*.

In relation to the omissions located earlier, the work also studies relevant aspects of both of the term's components, '*dhamma*' and '*kāya*,' in the early Buddhist canon. This is done particularly with respect to the academic questions mentioned above. Such a study of its two components, on the one hand, may help determine the relative significance of each component of the term '*dhammakāya*.' On the other hand, the study of these two components could clarify partly the notion of the whole term *dhammakāya* where any obscurity may be present.

While its method of analysis may be applicable also to the study of the term *dharmakāya* in Mahāyāna Buddhist thought in some respects, this work focuses somewhat exclusively on the early Buddhist sources and thought.

Methodology

This research is characterised by four methodological features.

First, it employs an inter-disciplinary analysis of the text - a kind of combination between philological, philosophical, psychological, scientific and heuristic analysis. As the work involves the interpretation of some specific terms, it employs philological analysis of the terms in order to demonstrate the 'possibility' of different interpretations of their meanings. It then determines the 'probability' of those possible interpretations by means of philosophical analysis. Psychological, scientific, and heuristic analyses will be employed also as supplementary to the clarification, explanation, and/or demonstration of the findings and arguments.

Secondly, as this study aims to investigate and re-determine the philosophical and soteriological significance of *dhammakāya* in early Buddhism, it employs early Buddhist canons as the main sources of information.[111]

Thirdly, its preferred mode of interpretation is analytical. As far as the studies regarding the term *dhammakāya* are concerned, different understandings of its connotations and characteristics are based mainly on the 'preferred styles of interpretation' of individual authors. Among the two continuous modes of perception that determine a researcher's methodology, the one employed in this work will be the more analytical mode with regard to the different meanings of the terms in question.[112] This is done in order to provide a solution to the

[111] The delimitation of sources will be made below.

[112] As Crangle states, "the fundamental attitude and preferred cognitive styles of the scholar to the basic data determine, to a degree, his or her methodology; this methodology then determines the extent to which examples of religion are understood as reconcilable and inclusive or *vice versa*." Edward Fitzpatrick Crangle, "Hermeneutics and the Ontological Categorisation of Religious Experience," *Australian Religion Studies Review* 9, no. 2 (1996): 22-31, 22.

problems resulting from the confusion or mis-identification either between different terms or between distinct meanings of a particular term, as stated earlier.

Fourthly, in order to pursue the aim of re-determining the import of a particular term in relation to early Buddhist viewpoint, this study interprets the information recorded in early Buddhist canon according to the early Buddhist philosophy embedded therein. Even though this work agrees that early Buddhist thought could be interpreted against the philosophy of other Indian contemplatives, as some scholars have suggested,[113] disagreements regarding the degree and mode of correspondence between Buddhism and those systems are not yet settled within the academic arena.

While similarly claiming a Vedic influence on Buddhist thought, scholars differ in the extent to which, and the manner in which, Brahmanism affects early Buddhist teaching.[114] Such a difference of opinions results in scholars' different methods of interpretation and their particular definitions of 'authentic Buddhist thought' or of the 'Buddha's intention,' through a comparison of Vedic and Buddhist literature.

One group of scholars claims that there is a direct development of Buddhist philosophy and practice from Vedic sources. Falk,[115] for example, proposes the early Vedic origin of all Indian philosophical systems. Through a peculiar 'genetic method,' she draws readers' attention to the possibility of a direct evolution of Buddhist philosophy through the Vedic and *Upaniṣadic* periods.

The two preferred modes of cognition in his work are entitled 'global' and 'analytical' styles. The former presents wholism and an emphasis on identity or generalisation, while the latter presents pluralism and sharp differentiation. Edward Fitzpatrick Crangle, "Cognitive Styles and Studies in Religion," *Australian Religion Studies Review* 8, no. 1 (1995): 22-26, 22.

[113] See, for example, Wilhelm Geiger, "Dhamma Und Brahman," *Zeitschrift für buddhismus* (1921): 73-83, 73; Richard Gombrich, "Recovering the Buddha's Message," in *The Buddhist Forum*, ed. Tadeusz Skorupski (London: School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 1990).

[114] A review of different scholarly interpretations of the relationship between Vedic and Buddhist practice is provided in Edward Fitzpatrick Crangle, *The Origin and Development of Early Indian Contemplative Practices* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1994), pp. 1-7.

[115] Maryla Falk, *Nāma-Rūpa and Dharma-Rūpa: Origin and Aspects of an Ancient Indian Conception* (Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1943); Maryla Falk, "Kośas, Kāya and Skandhas," *Proceedings of the All-India Oriental Conference* 10 (1941): 310-325.

Probably picking up Schayer's suggestion[116] in regard to the identification of certain parts of the Buddhist canon as being older or more authentic; Falk reconstructs Buddhist 'pre-canonical' or 'earliest' Buddhist ideas from certain points in the Buddhist scripture which are in line with *Upaniṣadic* thought.[117] Need's recent study also puts Buddhist teaching wholly within the Vedic context. It considers the similarity of terms used in both Buddhism and *Vedāṇga* literature to be an indication of Buddhist heredity from Vedic ancestry.[118]

Other scholars, such as Olivelle,[119] suggest that the *Upaniṣadic* and Buddhist philosophies have influenced each other along a course of time. In contrast with Need's interpretation, Olivelle understands the similar usage of terms found in both Buddhist and *Vedāṅga* literature as being a sign of Buddhist influence on the late Vedic literature. Likewise, Crangle proposes a 'zigzag development' among the Indian systems of practice by means of an investigation and comparison of certain terms which are connected to religious practice embedded in the early Vedas, *Upaniṣad*s, and Pali *sutta*s.[120]

Some scholars, among whom Gombrich[121] seems to be the most eminent, define Buddhist discourse as an antithesis of brahmanical ideas. Gombrich interprets the manner in which the Buddha refuses brahmanical claims as being

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[116] Stanislaw Schayer, "Precanonical Buddhism," *Archiv Orientalni* 7 (1935): 121-132, 124-132.

[117] While many of her interpretations of Buddhist context are interesting, questions may be raised with regard to the method used in identifying a pre-canonical thought, as Reynolds and Fowler have pointed out. Reynolds, "The Several Bodies of the Buddha," op. cit., p. 384; Murray Fowler, "Mito Psicologico Nell'india Antica_Review," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 66, no. 4 (1946): 324-325, 325.

[118] Need, op. cit, pp. 89-90.

[119] Patrick Olivelle, "The Semantic History of Dharma the Middle and Late Vedic Periods," *Journal of Indian philosophy* 32, no. 5-6 (2004): 491-511.

[120] Crangle, *The Origin and Development*, op. cit., p. 274.

[121] Richard F. Gombrich, *How Buddhism Began: The Conditioned Genesis of the Early Teachings*, Jordan Lectures in Comparative Religion; 17. (London ; Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Athlone Press, 1996); Richard Gombrich, "The Buddha's Book of Genesis," op. cit.

parodistic.[122] Nevertheless, he accepts also that the Buddha does not refuse all of the brahmanical claims.

Scholars have provided convincing reasons to support either their selection of methods or their varying judgements. However, it is hard to conclude that the Vedic and Buddhist literature in its present form allows us to go so far as to extract the 'actual teachings of the Buddha' with certainty by means of a comparison between the Vedic and Buddhist literature, given the obscure history of their correspondence.[123] Presumably, scholars are well aware of this fact; as Need states, "the actual relationship of the Buddhist materials to Vedic dictions is uncertain."[124]

Besides, even though some interpreters may have sensed the parodistic character in Buddhist discourses, it is hard to ascertain that it was the Buddha's intention to make a 'joke' or to be 'satirical' about brahmins, rather than to clarify facts to his audience. Such a parodistic sense may well reflect the interpreters' preferred style of perception of the Buddha's discourse, rather than reflecting the Buddha's intention *per se.*[125] Indeed, a refutation does not necessarily imply a satirical intention.[126] Besides, making a joke on or

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[122] Ibid., p. 161. Herein, Gombrich comments on the Buddha's discourse in the *Aggañña-sutta* regarding the origin of the universe as follows:

> Buddhists - not merely Theravādins, but all Buddhists - have indeed hitherto taken the text as being a more or less straight-faced account of how the universe, and in particular society, originated. I contend, on the other hand, that the Buddha never intended to give such an account; that the original intention of the text is satirical.

[123] While it is true that both Brahmanism and Buddhism must have certain correspondence, the extent to which and the manner in which they correspond are not entirely clear.

[124] Need, op. cit., p. 90.

[125] As Crangle states, "… cognitive styles demonstrate the creation of conceptual order from the phenomena of religion and religions. However, "the world as it is" remains independent of the researcher's mode of perception…" Edward F Crangle, "Cognitive Styles and Studies in Religion," op. cit., 25.

This seems to apply also to interpreters' perception of any objects, including Buddhist discourses. That is to say, an interpreter tends to interpret any objects, including Buddhist discourses, through his individual 'mental filter' particularised by his educational and socio-cultural settings. Yet, the 'true nature' of the objects does *not* change according to how it is interpreted.

[126] As to the example of the brahmanical claim that brahmins are born from the mouth of Brahmā, the Buddha refuted this by pointing out the fact that their womenfolk also menstruated and became pregnant in the same way as other women do. This might be seen as scandalous from the viewpoint of an English gentleman, and certainly from the brahmanical viewpoint, as Gombrich points out. However, it does not disprove that the Buddha could not have had an intention to clarify facts to his audience. Besides, it is possible also that such a way of clarification might have been common in those days; for similar discourses regarding the process of human birth are narrated elsewhere, without being related to brahmins. Cf. M.I.265-266, S.I.206.

ridiculing others may be defined either as 'frivolous or pointless speech' (*samphappalāpa-vācā*), 'harsh speech' (*pharusa-vācā*), or inappropriate talk (*tiracchānakathā*), from which the Buddha encourages both monastic and lay people to refrain.[127] It is hard to justify how the Buddha might do that himself, while teaching others not to do so. Moreover, such an interpretation contradicts both the Buddha's declaration of his 'ways of speaking'[128] and the declaration that he is an Arhat whose defilements are completely destroyed, as recorded in Buddhist scripture. It is possible that an interpreter may claim such Buddhist records, which disagree with his[129] interpretation, as being systematised or incorporated later and as not being 'authentic teachings of the Buddha' or 'the Buddha's intention.' Nevertheless, doing so hardly protects him from an objection that he is arbitrarily ascribing his own interpretation to be the 'true intention' either of the Buddha or of the compilers of Buddhist canon,[130] given

[127] For example, see A.V.128-129, A.V.250-251, A.V.258.

[128] For example, see *Abhayarājakumāra-sutta*, M.I.395.

In this *sutta*, when asked by prince Abhaya whether the Buddha would utter a speech which is not dear or agreeable to others, the Buddha declares his speaking characters, which can be summarised as follows:

1. Knowing what is unreal, incorrect, and useless, whether or not it will be dear or agreeable to the audience, the Buddha would *not* speak it.
2. Knowing what is real, correct, but useless, whether or not it will be dear or agreeable to the audience, the Buddha would *not* speak it.
3. Knowing what is *real*, *correct*, and *useful*, whether or not it will be dear or agreeable to the audience, the Buddha would *know the right time* to *speak* it.

The point of this declaration is that, the Buddha would say only what he knows is *real*, *correct*, and *beneficial to listeners* and in an appropriate time. Even though it is not dear or agreeable to his audience, he would know the right time to speak it. This is done for the audience's good. He compares this with taking out a stick or pebble from a child's mouth, even it means drawing blood, in order to save that child. The Buddha's speech is characterised by his compassion to beings. Cf. *Ambaṭṭha-sutta*, D.I.89-99 for an example of such speech.

While this work agrees that the audience might have felt shameful sometimes, as Gombrich states, it seems somewhat over-stated to claim that it was the Buddha's 'intention to ridicule rather than to clarify facts to his audience,' given his speaking characters mentioned above.

Given such speaking characters, the Buddha could have made any statement which *either contradicts or agrees* with the claims of other Indian systems, as far as that is *true* to him and *beneficial* to his audience. Looking in this perspective, the Buddha cannot be labeled exclusively as either anti-brahmanist or pro brahmin.

[129] While being aware of the inappropriateness of gender inequality, this work employs the use of masculine pronouns to refer to humans in general. This is done in order to avoid creating awkward constructs in English expression. Readers should therefore understand that a masculine pronoun in this study, where it is used in a general sense, refers to a 'human' rather than to a 'man.' In addition, this style of expression is in harmony with that of Buddhist discourses. As can be perceived, the use of a masculine pronoun in Buddhist discourses in general sense does not always refer to 'a man' but rather to 'a human.'

[130] As Cabezón states,

> "[O]verlooking" traditional hermeneutics provides modern scholarship with the necessary space to develop "exegesis" (*lege* agenda) of their own, and there is certainly nothing wrong with this as long as it is acknowledged as such and not portrayed either as the *unique* reading or as the views of the tradition. But sadly, this is too often the case.

such an obscure historical account. That being the case, it is difficult to consider the early Buddhist viewpoint from the view of other Indian philosophy *with certainty*.

Moreover, even though their interaction is undeniable, Buddhism differs from other Indian traditions in certain respects, particularly in regard to the final and perfect enlightenment.[131] Otherwise it would not have been able to distinguish itself as a separate system from those other contemplative systems. In Buddhism, some words shared with pre-Buddhist or contemplative traditions are used in the same context as they are used in other systems. But others are newly defined, differentiated from their usage in those traditions, or ascribed new semantic values within the Buddhist context. As Geiger states,[132] the Buddha did not abandon a term which was currently used in other Indian systems, but he used it in a modified sense, giving particular meanings to it, or putting it in a new perspective. Thus, Buddhism has its specific character which can be studied from its texts as a whole.

As regards the Buddhist canonical texts, the present study is aware of the possibility that they could have incorporated a number of later additions which could not be the Buddha's original words. However, at least the philosophy

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José Ignacio Cabezón, "Vasubandhu's *Vyākhyāyukti* on the Authenticity of Mahāyāna *Sūtras*," in *Texts in Context: Traditional Hermeneutics in South Asia*, ed. Jeffrey Richard Timm (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992), p. 221. While the 'traditional hermeneutics' mentioned above are related mainly to Mahāyāna exegeses, the claim conveys a general sense in regard to modern scholarship on any Buddhist traditions.

[131] The word 'enlightenment,' when used in this work, refers to the spiritual realisation or attainment in the Buddhist sense. It signifies a directly experiential realisation, a penetration arising in the contemplative praxis, along with the destruction of defilements and self-transformation. It could be used for any level of spiritual attainment that transformed the person from a worldly (*puthujjana*) to a Buddhist noble one (*ariya-puggala*), or from a lower noble state to the higher, according to Buddhist philosophy. Thus, there could be many different levels of enlightenment. In this work, the word 'enlightenment' is *not* used in the sense of 'education that results in understanding and the spread of knowledge' or 'an advocation of the use of reason in the reappraisal of accepted ideas, social institutions, or religion' as occurred in some European countries in the eighteenth century. Geddes MacGregor, *The Everyman Dictionary of Religion and Philosophy* (London: Dent, 1990), pp. 217-218. Nor does it refer to what Kant defines as "man's release from his self-incurred tutelage." Immanuel Kant, "What is Enlightenment?," in *The Insider/Outsider Problem in the Study of Religion: A Reader*, ed. Russell T. McCutcheon, *Controversies in the Study of Religion.* (London ; New York: Cassell, 1999), p. 133. Thus, it does not refer to a purely intellectual exercise as is often understood in the west, but rather the spiritual attainment of a Buddhist noble state which is relevant to the person's 'being freed from defilements' either to a certain degree or to the fullest degree.

[132] Geiger, "Dhamma und Brahman," op. cit., p. 75.

The same is remarked by other scholars. As Gombrich states, "The fact that the Buddha gave new values to terms like *brahmana* is of course very well known" [Gombrich, "Recovering the Buddha's Message," op. cit., p. 25.], and as Cutler writes, "There are many examples in the Buddha's teachings of his redefining terms from the society in which he lived, which was dominated by the brahminical religion and its ideology." Sally Mellick Cutler, "The Pāli Apadāna Collection," *Journal of the Pali Text Society* 20 (1994): 1-42, 6.

embedded therein is still bound in the frame of what is called 'early Buddhism' as a whole and thus represents an 'early Buddhist thought/viewpoint.' For these reasons, our study chooses to employ the early Buddhist canons as its main sources of data and interprets the early Buddhist discourses according to its own philosophy. With this method, it hopes to contribute to a wider or alternative understanding of the *dhammakāya* in early Buddhist thought.

The following indicates sources of information to be employed in this research.

Delimitation of Sources

Buddhist literature as we have today includes texts from different ages. With the extant Buddhist literature in its present form, it might be considered too ambitious to hope to get back to the Buddha's original words, in a time when the teachings had not yet been recorded in writing. Nevertheless, this does not preclude the possibility of going back as far as possible with regard to the early Buddhist teachings.

Ideally, to understand the 'earliest Buddhism,' we should get back to the time of the Buddha or to the time when there was not yet a separation[133] of Buddhism into different schools. However, according to traditional accounts, the Buddhist canonical texts were written down only after the separation of schools.[134] Thus, the best sources of the earliest Buddhist teachings are the records of those 'early Buddhist schools.'

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[133] 'The separation' here means more than the mere difference in opinions. Differences of opinion occurred also while the Buddha was still alive, as evinced in the Pali *sutta*s, but it did not cause a separation. The separation into different schools occurs when monks consider themselves as belonging to different groups, which results in the separation of their monastic activities.

[134] For Pali accounts, see, for example, *Dīpavaṃsa* 20.20-21; *Mahāvaṃsa* 33.100-101. The writing down of Sanskrit texts, or the translation of the texts from Prakrit to Sanskrit, of Sarvāstivāda school is said also to have occurred during the traditional council in the reign of King Kaniṣka. Fu-Ping Chang, "Meditation in Early Buddhism: The Interpretation of the Developmental Process of Transformation" (Doctor of Philosophy, California Institute of Integral Studies, 2002), p. 33.

Of those records, textual resources[135] represent the main sources of Buddhist knowledge accessible to scholars. Supplementary to that are epigraphical witnesses which have been discovered intermittently.

Scholars have debated the relative values of these two types of sources in Buddhist studies. For example, Schopen suggested that textual sources should be subordinated to material evidence, i.e., archeological findings, particularly edicts, that support their context. This is because the latter is more concrete and can be dated with a degree of certainty.[136] A number of attempts have been made to disprove the reliability of textual sources. However, it is undeniable that epigraphical witnesses are too limited in their content. Therefore, despite the benefit of their certain dates, they cannot represent Buddhist teachings as a whole.[137]

In contrast, literary sources are rich in information.[138] They contain both doctrinal and historical evidence. In spite of the objection that the texts could have been intermittently edited,[139] so that their contents can hardly be regarded as historical,[140] the agreements of information found between material and textual evidence have disproved that objection.[141] Instead, it affirms the

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[135] This work is aware that epigraphical evidence can also, in a sense, be regarded as 'text.' However, the title 'textual resource' or 'literary evidence' is used here for the specific purpose of distinguishing either published or unpublished works, containing a mass of textual information, from epigraphical or material evidence, such as edicts.

[136] Gregory Schopen, "Two Problems in the History of Indian Buddhism," *Studien zur Indologie und Iranistik* (1985): 9-47, 9-11.

[137] To elaborate; to produce an edict is much harder than to publish or copy a literary source, because of both the time required and finance. This has two implications. On the one hand, as it is hard to reproduce an edict, the content which is inscribed therein is not subject to frequent editing. Our present study agrees with Schopen in this point. On the other hand, due to this limitation, only people with either sovereign or financial power could command the production of edicts. Thus, the contents of the edicts are likely to be more selective according to the patrons' preferences or their specific purposes. Schopen seems to have ignored this fact. That being the case, the absence of Buddhist teachings regarding practice and soteriological purposes from the Aśokan edicts is normal. Rather than representing all Buddhist teachings, those edicts perhaps represent only parts of Buddhist teachings which King Aśoka would like to disseminate. In light of this, it is hard to conclude that the teachings not found in those 'oldest Buddhist edicts' represent the inventions of later Buddhists.

[138] Alexander Wynne, "How Old Is the Suttapitaka? The Relative Value of Textual and Epigraphical Sources for the Study of Early Indian Buddhism," St John's College, http://www.ocbs.org/research.php, p. 4.

[139] Schopen, "Two Problems in the History of Indian Buddhism," op. cit., pp. 9-11.

[140] Gregory Schopen, *Bones, Stones, and Buddhist Monks: Collected Papers on the Archaeology, Epigraphy, and Texts of Monastic Buddhism in India*, Studies in the Buddhist Traditions. (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1996), p. 3.

[141] Wynne, op. cit.

Examples of correspondence mentioned here are such as the mention of *stūpa* containing the Buddha's relics found in the Pali and Sanskrit texts of *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* and in an Aśokan inscription as well as similar wordings used in both the text and the inscription (pp.7-8) ; the correspondence of names of missionary monks mentioned in the Pali chronicles and in

authenticity and the early date of the message contained in literary sources. As Wynne points out, a number of Schopen's attempts to disprove the reliability of Buddhist textual resources have turned instead into the confirmation of their authenticity.[142] At times, the evidence Schopen raises to support his argument even indicates that the dates of textual records, especially the Pali canon, must be earlier than that of most inscriptions. In addition, it is only with the aid of literary evidence that scholars could study material evidence properly.[143] Without it, they could hardly know what the edicts were talking about. This affirms that the wealth of information in literary resources cannot be disregarded. As Wynne argues, "the only way of knowing anything about early Buddhism is through its texts."[144]

Textual resources of different early Buddhist schools were originally preserved in various Indian languages.[145] Of the extant canon, only the Pali canon of the Theravāda school has been preserved as a complete set. The texts of other early schools are mostly lost; the original remains are mostly fragmented, while most parts are preserved in their Chinese and Tibetan translations only.[146] For this reason, the Pali canon was once regarded as the sole representative of early Buddhism.[147]

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the inscription on two reliquaries discovered in *Vidiśā* (p. 12); the areas of missionary activities mentioned in Aśokan inscription and in Pali chronicles; the missionary episode narrated in the text which is confirmed by inscriptions (pp. 13-14). For further information, see the reference cited.

[142] Ibid., pp. 7-11.

[143] Ibid., p. 5.

[144] Ibid., op. cit., pp. 3-4. In support to this argument, Wynne has drawn a number of events to affirm that the texts of early Buddhist schools, especially the Pali canon, contain historical facts and that they are faithful to the founder's teachings. Ibid., throughout.

[145] Languages mentioned are those in the middle Indo-Aryan (MIA) family such as Pali, Sanskrit, Prakrit, Apabhraṃsa, Māgadhī, and Paiśācī.

V. Raghavan, "The Legacy of Sanskrit," in *Languages of India*, ed. V. K. Ed Narasimhan (1958), p. 11; Vasubandhu and P. Pradhan, *Abhidharmakosabhasyam of Vasubandhu*, ed. Anantalal Thakur, 2nd ed., Tibetan Samskrit Works Series (Patna: K.P. Jayaswal Research Institute, 1975), pp. xix-xxi; Hajime Nakamura, *Indian Buddhism: A Survey with Bibliographical Notes* (Hirakata, Japan: KUFS Publication, 1980), pp. 22-25; Mizuno, op. cit., pp. 26-27; Bhikkhu Sujato, *Sects & Sectarianism: The Origins of Buddhist Schools* (Santipada Publications, 2006), p. 54.

[146] Nakamura, op. cit., pp. 22, 25; Akira Hirakawa, "Buddhist Literature: Survey of Texts," in *The Encyclopedia of Religion* (New York: Macmillan, 1987), pp. 509-529; Thomas Oberlies, "Ein Bibliographischer Uberblick Uber Die Kanonischen Texte Der Sravakayana-Schulen Des Buddhismus," *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Südasiens und Archiv für indische Philosophie* 47 (2003): 37-84.

[147] J. W. de Jong and Australian National University. Faculty of Asian Studies., *The Beginnings of Buddhism : The A.L. Basham Lecture for 1992* (Canberra: Faculty of Asian Studies, Australian National University, 1994), p. 19.

At the same time, scholars did not neglect the texts of other early Buddhist schools. As a means to find out the 'oldest cores' of Buddhist teachings, previous scholars have conducted a number of comparative studies of the scriptures from different early Buddhist schools.[148] Two main resources employed are the Theravāda Pali canon and Chinese translations of the texts of other schools. Supplementary to that are canonical fragments and epigraphical witnesses. With this method, the correspondence of texts from different schools is generally regarded as an indication of the older parts that go back to the pre-sectarian period.[149] While some discrepancies are found among the texts, most scholars agree that the older portions of the early scriptures - generally meaning the *Vinayapiṭaka*[150] and *Suttapiṭaka* - are not much different from one another.[151] This seems to affirm the status of the Pali canon as a true representative of early Buddhism.[152] Therefore, many previous scholars base

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[148] Examples of pioneering works in this regard are Erich Frauwallner, *The Earliest Vinaya and the Beginnings of Buddhist Literature*, Serie Orientale Roma; 8. (Roma: Instituto Italiano Per Il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, 1956); Erich Frauwallner, Sophie Francis Kidd, and Ernst Steinkellner, *Studies in Abhidharma Literature and the Origins of Buddhist Philosophical Systems*, Suny Series in Indian Thought. (Albany , N.Y.: State University of New York, 1995); André Bareau, *Recherches sur la biographie du Buddha dans les Sūtrapiṭaka et les Vinayapiṭaka Anciens*, Publications de L'Ecole Française D'Extrême-Orient; v. 53, 77 (Paris: L'Ecole Française D'Extrême-Orient, 1963). A review of these works is made in Wynne, op. cit.

[149] Wynne, op. cit., pp. 25-26; Schopen, *Bones, Stones, and Buddhist Monks*, op. cit, pp. 25-26.

Schopen denies this methodology, claiming that the agreement between the texts of different schools can be also an indication of their influence on one another at a later date. Schopen, *Bones, Stones, and Buddhist Monks*, op. cit, pp. 28-29. However, Wynne contends that the comparison of literary sources from different schools and epigraphical witnesses suggests that it is unlikely. For "such an endeavour [to produce such a high degree of correspondence] would have required organisation on a scale which was simply inconceivable in the ancient world," as Wynne argues. Wynne, op. cit., p. 29.

Besides, if a school were to adopt a doctrine from other school(s) into its own scripture and refers to such a teaching as being its own, this should only be because the adopted doctrine agrees, or at least does not contradict, its philosophy. Thus, the claim of such doctrine as being its own philosophy does not necessarily mean 'claiming others' as one's own' but should rather mean 'an improvement of the explanation of one's own philosophy by the incorporation of an additional record which the school might have neglected.

[150] In particular, parts of the *Vinayapiṭaka* are employed in comparative studies such as the *khandhaka* [Frauwallner, *The Earliest Vinaya*, op. cit.], and the *pātimokkha*. W. Pachow, *A Comparative Study of the Pratimoksa on the Basis of Its Chinese, Tibetan, Sanskrit and Pali Versions*, Sino-Indian Studies ; No. 4. (Santiniketan: The Sino-Indian Cultural Society, 1955). Frauwallner compares also the *abhidhamma* of different schools. He considers the *Vibhaṅga* of the Theravāda, the *Dharmaskandha* of the Sarvāstivāda, and the *Śāriputrābhidharma* of the Dharmaguptaka schools as 'early texts.' Erich Frauwallner, Kidd, and Steinkellner, op. cit.

[151] Erich Frauwallner, "The Historical Data We Possess on the Person and the Doctrine of the Buddha," *East and West* 8 (1957): 309-312; de Jong, op. cit.

[152] Norman notes also the similarity of the structure of early Buddhist scriptures of different schools - the reason for which he arranges Sanskrit or Prakrit literature under the relevant Pali headings, "since the Hīnayāna canons follow closely the pattern of the Theravādin canon, with the exception of the Abhidharma." K. R. Norman, *Pali Literature, Including the Canonical Literature in Prakrit and Sanskrit of All the Hinayana Schools of Buddhism* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1983), p. ix.

their studies regarding early Buddhist thought exclusively on this set of texts, especially on the two parts mentioned above.[153]

Besides being the sole complete extant set, which makes it 'the best preserved set' of early Buddhist canonical texts,[154] the Pali canon is well-known as a 'closed canon' which denies the addition of later written works into the list of texts.[155] Collins recently challenged this idea.[156] He suspects that the reputation of the Pali canon as a unique 'closed canon' has been 'created' by the monks of the Ceylonese Mahāvihāra monastery, in order to register the canon they wrote down as the earliest source of Buddhist teachings. According to Collins, this 'self-legitimation' was done by means of 'text-orientation,' i.e., by writing the Pali chronicles and commentaries defining the Pali canon as a 'closed set.' In other words, Collins believes that the presentation of the Pali canon as a closed list was written deliberately into Pali post-canonical literature in order to establish the Pali canon as the sole representative of earliest Buddhism.

Nevertheless, it is evident that those Pali chronicles contain at least some historical facts,[157] as acknowledged above, and that the claim that the Pali canon was closed at an early date is attested to in many scholarly works.[158]

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[153] Examples of such works are T. W. Rhys Davids, *Early Buddhism*, Religions Ancient and Modern. (London: Archibald Constable, 1908); Joaquin Perez-Remon, *Self and Non-Self in Early Buddhism* (The Hague--Paris-New York: Mouton, 1980); Balakrishna Govind Gokhale, "Early Buddhism and the Urban Resolution," *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 5, no. 2 (1982): 7-22; Frank J Hoffman, "Rationality and Mind in Early Buddhism," *Philosophy East and West* 36, no. 4 (1986): 432; Uma Chakravarti, "The Social Dimensions of Early Buddhism," (Delhi: OUP, 1987).

Similarly, Theravāda Buddhists regard their canon as if it were the exact words of the Buddha [Walpola Rahula, "Theravāda-Mahāyāna Buddhism," in *Gems of Buddhist Wisdom*, ed. Buddhist Missionary Society (Malaysia), *Buddhist Missionary Series*. (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: Buddhist Missionary Society, 1996), 454-455.], despite the well-known fact that the *Abhidhamma-piṭaka* is a sectarian exegesis [Sue Hamilton, *Early Buddhism: A New Approach : The I of the Beholder*, Curzon Critical Studies in Buddhism. (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon, 2000), p 3.] which differs from school to school and thus cannot be the Buddha's actual words.

[154] Mark Allon, "The Oral Composition and Transmission of Early Buddhist Texts," in *Indian Insights: Buddhism, Brahmanism and Bhakti : Papers from the Annual Spalding Symposium on Indian Religions*, ed. Peter Connolly and Sue Hamilton (London: Luzac Oriental, 1997), 39.

[155] Wynne, op. cit., p. 9. Cf. Steven Collins, "On the Very Idea of the Pali Canon," *Journal of the Pali Text Society* 15 (1991): 89-126, 90.

[156] Ibid.

[157] Wynne, op. cit., p. 12.

[158] As previous scholars observe, some ideas or popular practices prevailing in the texts of other schools or edicts were not included into the Pali canon, but its commentaries. Scholars take this to be an indication that the Pali canon must have been relatively fixed at an early date. Ibid., pp. 8-11; Hermann Oldenberg and Pali Text Society (London England), *The Vinaya Piṭakaṃ: One of the Principal Buddhist Holy Scriptures in the Pāli Language* (London: Pali Text Society : Distributed by Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1977), p. xlviii; Richard Gombrich, "Making Moutains without Molehills: The Case of the

Therefore, the writing of the Pali chronicles, defining the Pali canon as a 'closed canon,' can be looked at also in another aspect. Perhaps it can be understood as informing an historical fact, rather than merely registering one's own traditional source as the representative of the earliest Buddhist record.

Here, another point should be made. The Theravāda monks of the *Mahāvihāra* monastery wrote down the Pali canon. By so doing, they could enjoy the privilege of including their views or adjusting the context of the canon according to their viewpoint, if they so desired. However, rather than doing this, it is evident that they put the typical *Mahāvihāra* writings into the post-canonical literature, which is known to be theirs, while the Pali canon was left untouched.[159] This could be understood as their showing respect to the Buddha's teaching, and could help explain why the Theravāda Buddhists regard the teachings included in the Pali canon as the Buddha's own words. It affirms also the closure of the canon. Thus, Collin's argument can neither preclude the fact that the Pali canon was finally closed nor disprove its reliability as being one of the earliest records of Buddhist teachings. Thus, some later studies still employ the Pali canon as, at least one of, the earliest sources of the Buddhist teachings.[160]

However, the fact that the Pali canon is a 'closed canon' does not ensure that its content covers all aspects of the early Buddhist teachings. Such a definition could, at best, only preclude the later additions to the text, and thus affirm the authenticity of the teachings recorded in the canon. It cannot prevent certain 'non-understandable' elements from elimination, if any, during the editing

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Missing Stupa," *Journal of the Pali Text Society* 15 (1991): 141-143, 143; Norman, *A Philological Approach to Buddhism*, op. cit., p. 140; Hamilton, *Early Buddhism*, op. cit., p. 3.

[159] The key terms indicating Mahāvihāra typical writing as Collins suggests, such as *vitaṇḍa*, *vetulya*, or *vetulla*, referring to 'heterodox' thought adopted by the monks of the Abhyagirivihāra monastery, appear only in the Pali commentaries and other later works. They find no place in the Pali canon.

Collins himself also mentions that the Pali text, although written down by monks of the *Mahāvihāra* monastery, was used by all three Theravāda groups of the time. Collins, op. cit., p. 98. It is hard to believe that the monks of other monasteries would have accepted the Pali canon as theirs, if it contains any of *Mahāvihāra* typical characters.

[160] See, for example, Harrison, op. cit.; Crangle, *The Origin and Development of Early Indian Contemplative Practices*, op. cit.; David J. Kalupahana, *Ethics in Early Buddhism* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1995); Hamilton, *Early Buddhism*, op. cit.; Gethin, "He Who Sees Dhamma Sees Dhammas," op. cit.

process. Also, it cannot preclude the abbreviation of certain tedious and repetitive explanations, which are present throughout the text,[161] let alone the mistakes made during the editing or copying process of manuscripts. Therefore, Collins's question on the equation 'Pali canon = early Buddhism' is reasonable.

That the Pali canon is not *all* of the early Buddhist teaching, but *part* of it, is claimed also by other scholars.[162] It is, thus, suggested that the study of early Buddhism should be based on a comparative study of at least the Pali canon and the Chinese *Āgama*s.[163] As is evident, an increasing number of academic works on the early Buddhist teachings have employed the Chinese *Āgama*s as sources of their study alongside with the Pali canon.[164]

Generally, the *Āgama*s are regarded as parallel to the Pali *Nikāya*s, the oldest section of the Buddhist canon. However, unlike the Pali canononical texts which all belong to the Theravāda school only, the Chinese translations of the *Āgama*s are collected from the texts of different schools. As Hirakawa lists, the *Dīrghāgama* (T. 01), corresponding to the *Dīgha-nikāya*, probably belongs to the Dharmaguptaka school. The *Madhyamāgama* (T. 26), corresponding to the *Majjhima-nikāya*, belongs to the Sarvāstivāda school. The *Samyuktāgama* (T. 99), corresponding to the Pali *Saṃyutta-nikāya*, belongs to the Mūlasarvāstivada school,[165] while the school affiliation of another set of the

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[161] This is evident, for example, in the case of *Dhammacakkappavattana-sutta*. As the detailed depiction of the process is long and repetitive, it seems that the steps of the realisation of the four noble truths have been abbreviated. This will be discussed further below, in chapter 2.

This could happen in both the editing and copying processes. It is evident also in many versions of Buddhist texts. While some editors have done very neat works, some are not careful enough in such a matter. At some points, the abbreviations were done even without any indication or acknowledgement. This could make the reader misunderstand that what he/she is reading is the whole *sutta*, while it is not. It is unfortunate that not all readers have such a critical eye, or are willing to take trouble comparing it with other versions of the text. Therefore, the careless copying and editing give rise to the diversity among different versions of the text, as well as increases the possibility of misinterpretation of the texts among scholars.

[162] For example, see Mun-Keat Choong, *The Fundamental Teachings of Early Buddhism: A Comparative Study Based on the Sūtrāṅga Portion of the Pāli Saṃyutta-Nikāya and the Chinese Saṃyuktāgama*, Beiträge zur Indologie; Bd. 32. (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2000), p. 1.

[163] Ibid.

[164] For example, see Chau Minh, *The Chinese Madhyama Agama and the Pali Majjhima Nikaya : A Comparative Study*, 1st Indian ed., Buddhist Traditions; V. 15. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 1991); Chang, op. cit.; Xing, op. cit.; Andrew Glass, "Connected Discourses in Gandhāra: A Study, Edition, and Translation of Four Samyuktāgama-Type Sūtras from the Senior Collection" (Doctor of Philosophy, University of Washington, 2006).

[165] Some ascribe this to the Sarvāstivāda school. [Choong, op. cit. p. 6. referring to Yin Shun, *Yuanshi Fojiao Shengdian Zhi Jicheng = the Formation of Early Buddhist Texts* (Taipei: Shengwen Chubanshe, 1971), pp. 97-98.]

same *Āgama* (T. 100) has not yet been ascribed. The *Ekottarāgama* (T. 125), corresponding to the Pali *Aṅguttara-nikāya*, is generally held as belonging to the Mahāsāṃghika school. However, Hirakawa believes that the latter ascription is doubtful, for the doctrinal points presented therein are different from those found in the Mahāsāṃghika-*vinaya*.[166]

Regarding the corresponding texts of the *Khuddaka-nikāya*, he writes:

> Both the Dharmaguptaka and Mahāsāṃghika schools apparently had *Kṣudraka Piṭakas*, but these were never translated into Chinese. Several individual texts that correspond to those in the Pali *Khuddaka Nikāya* exist in Sanskrit or Chinese.[167]

While the Pali canon and Chinese *Āgama*s are generally in agreement with respect to doctrinal points, there are present also some "distinctive features peculiar to each school."[168] An example of the differences raised is that of the season of the annual monastic retreat. The Pali canon refers to the 'rainy retreat,' while the Chinese mentions a 'summer retreat.' Here, Minh concludes, "[T]he rainy season in Magadha corresponds to the summer season in North West India and in China."[169] Choong makes a similar observation in his comparative study of the *sūtraṅga* portion of the Chinese *Saṃyuktāgama* and the Pali *Saṃyutta-nikāya*, "The comparative study of the two versions (SN and SA) finds them to be largely in agreement on essential points, but also reveals some significant areas of disagreement."[170] This affirms that the study of the variations among these two sets of *tipiṭaka* would be beneficial in order to understand early Buddhism in general.

While this work agrees that a comparative study of both the Pali canon and the Chinese *Āgama*s is useful, it is aware also that the use of Chinese references must be employed with great caution. As it has been acknowledged, there are many factors involved which might have affected the accuracy of the Chinese

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[166] Hirakawa, op. cit., p. 513.

[167] Ibid.

[168] Minh, op. cit., p. 29.

[169] Ibid.

[170] Choong, op. cit., p. xiii.

translation.[171] First, the grammatical systems of Indian and of Chinese languages are very different. This makes translation difficult. Secondly, the translations of the *Āgama* sections were mostly made in the early phase, when Chinese people were not yet familiar with the newly introduced Buddhist thought that differs greatly from their old culture.[172] Thirdly, the translators of the early phase were not native Chinese, but Buddhist missionaries from India and Central Asia whose knowledge of Chinese language was limited. Thus, the word choices employed in translations, even with the aid of native Chinese speakers, could be sometimes misleading.[173] Fourthly, during that time, the teachings were brought into China in the form of oral narrative recited from memory by Buddhist missionaries, without the aid of written texts. Fifthly, in the early phase, Buddhist missionaries had to rely on their own economic resources, without royal or governmental support. Consequently, they had to complete their works in a rush, "even at the cost of extracting the essential parts from the bigger works and calling them by their original titles."[174] Due to these factors, the pioneering translations of Buddhist texts from Indian languages into Chinese during this period may not be expected to be literal or very accurate. Moreover, the translations could also have been made from texts in other Central Asian languages, rather than from the Indian originals as is generally understood. In this regard, the use of early Indian manuscripts seems to be a good supplement, where they are accessible and relevant, despite their fragmental state.

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[171] W Pachow, *Chinese Buddhism: Aspect of Interaction and Reinterpretation* (Washington DC: Har SL, 1983), p. 102-104; Mizuno, op. cit., pp. 41-55.

[172] It is unfortunate that the later Chinese translations, which are generally regarded as being 'literal' are all translations of Mahāyāna texts, not of the *Āgama*s.

[173] As Pachow notes:

> … when the foreign missionaries came to China their first difficulty was the language. They, of course, could not hope to speak Chinese correctly in a short time, nor could the scholars of the country easily master Sanskrit, especially its most complicated system of grammar. As their desire to preach and spread the Buddhist doctrine was very great, so they had somehow or other to get the work done through the cooperation of the Chinese scholars. The results of such translation were partly comprehensible and partly ambiguous, because, at that time, the Buddhist doctrine and its terminology were absolutely foreign to the minds of the Chinese people. (p. 103)

A comparison of some passages in the Chinese *Āgamas* with their corresponding Pali passages seems to support this possibility, as will be discussed in Chapter 4 below.

[174] Pachow, *Chinese Buddhism*, op. cit., p. 104.

As mentioned above, there is high degree of correspondence between the teachings recorded in old portions, mainly the *Suttapiṭaka* and parts of the *Vinayapiṭaka*, of texts from different early Buddhist schools. It has been observed that those differences are rarely on doctrinal points, but mostly on external features.[175] Therefore, this work takes the Pali canon as its main literary source. It employs the Buddhist philosophy embedded in the Pali canon, which is one of the earliest records, to be the representative of the early Buddhist thought against which the interpretations of terms will be made. At the same time, the work employs also the information from the Chinese *Āgama*s and the fragmented manuscripts of other early Buddhist schools, as it is accessible and relevant, to supplement the information and discussions.

The investigation will be done mainly on the *Suttapiṭaka* section, for the relevant Pali passages belong to this part of the canon. The old parts of the *Vinayapiṭaka* may be employed where applicable. Where it is necessary to consult the *abhidhamma* and/or post-canonical texts, which are known to be sectarian literature, the thesis will work comparatively on the texts of more than

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[175] Frauwallner, *The Earliest Vinaya and theBeginnings of Buddhist Literature*, op. cit., p. 4; L.S. Cousins, "Pali Oral Literature," in *Buddhist Studies: Ancient and Modern*, ed. Philip Denwood, *Collected Papers on South Asia, No. 4.* (London: Curzon Press, 1983), p. 5.

In the latter, Cousins comments on the differences of the first four *Nikāyas* from in Pali, Sanskrit, Chinese, and Tibetan versions as follows:

> These divergences are typically greatest in matters of little importance - such items as the location of suttas, the names of individual speakers or the precise order of occurrence of events. Only very rarely are they founded on doctrinal or sectarian differences... They are very similar in their substantive content."

This, on the one hand, seems to affirm the authenticity of the *Suttapiṭaka*. On the other hand, it indicates also the wonderful ability of those early translators of Buddhist texts into Chinese, in spite of the difficulties they had encountered within the above described situations. A comparison of Sanskrit manuscript of *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* and its Pali correspondent supports the above claim. The differences found in both versions of the same *sutta* are merely in minute details. A good example is that there is either an insertion into the Sanskrit version or an omission from the Pali one of a sentence given by the Buddha to Vassakāra, confirming the growth and profitable things to be obtained by the *Vajji*s who still adopt each of the seven observances (*dharma*) taught by the Buddha. In the Pali version, such sentence is mostly omitted and is presented only once - at the end of the seventh observances. However, the difference is merely a matter of conversational pattern while the whole concept of the teaching regarding the seven observances adopted by the *Vajji*s is still completely preserved. Another example is that the event of Cunda, the son of a goldsmith, offering the last meal to the Buddha is found in different order in the *sutta* belonging to these two sets of texts. The whole story, however, is still the same in both versions. Also, the *Mahāsudassana-sutta* in the Pali version is a separate *sutta* given in the immediate order after the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta*, while in the Sanskrit version it is included as the last part of the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*. Again, the difference here is merely a matter of external feature, which seems to be because of later arrangement, whereas the whole content in both versions of texts is still the same.

D.II.72. C.f. Ernst Waldschmidt, *Das Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*, 3 parts, Akadamie-Verlag, Abh. d. Akad. d. zu Berlin ph-hist. Kl, 1950, 1951; Mark Allon, "The Mahāparinirvāṇa-Sūtra (Incorporating the Mahāsudarśana-Sūtra)" (Honours sub-thesis, Australian National University, 1987).

one school so as to allow its study to pass beyond the limitation of one specific viewpoint of a particular school towards early Buddhism in general.

Limitation of This Work

As is normal with most research done within a specific timeframe, this work necessarily has its own limitations. First, due to the lack of other early Buddhist sources, the work is focused mainly on the Pali source. The Chinese *Āgama*s will be studied also as an additional source, to substitute the lost Indian texts of other Buddhist schools. Secondly, even though the work attempts to investigate thoroughly the early Buddhist sources, there is still early Buddhist material - especially the fragmentary manuscripts - which is currently not accessible. This will need to be left for future studies. Thirdly, as stated above, the work takes almost exclusively the philosophy embedded in the Pali canon as being representative of early Buddhist thought. The reason for this is the high degree of correspondence between the early texts of different schools, which suggests the authenticity of the teaching recorded in the Pali canon, as well as the evidence indicating its early date that may go as far back as the pre-sectarian period. Further studies may perfect this interpretation of early Buddhist *dhammakāya* through the full supplement of philosophy embedded in other early Buddhist texts. Finally, as the issues in question are complex, the clarifications in this work would certainly appear insufficient in certain respects. In that regard, future studies may help fill in the gaps left by the present study.

Structure of the Work

This work consists of five chapters; i.e., three main chapters as well as an introductory chapter and a concluding chapter. The three main chapters contain a study of the term *dhamma*, *kāya*, and *dhammakāya*, respectively.

The second chapter that follows concerns a study of the term *dhamma*. It begins by relating the chapter with the academic problems presented above and

the study of the etymology and historical background of the term *dhamma*. It then explores the different usages of the term *dhamma* in early Buddhism by reviewing previous scholarly works on its different connotations and categorisation of its meanings in Buddhist thought. Then, a preferred classification of its meanings as relevant in this work is employed to accommodate its different usages in early Buddhist texts. The inter-relation and distinction of *dhamma*s in different aspects, particularly in the sense of 'reality realised' and the 'teaching taught,' is discussed. Afterward, the work discusses some rarely mentioned aspects of Buddhist *dhamma*s, namely, their functions and efficacy together with their necessary condition, and the manner in which *dhamma*s are realised. These are performed in order to outline a pattern of general steps of the process of enlightenment, either partial or perfect. Finally, the chapter discusses the general relation between the Buddha and the *dhamma*, and the essence of 'seeing the *dhamma*(s)' in correspondence with 'seeing the Buddha.' A discussion of these aspects of Buddhist *dhamma* will serve partly as a basis for the analysis and discussion of *dhammakāya* in the fourth chapter.

The third chapter explores all possible meanings of the term *kāya*. The nature of the chapter is rather investigatory than conclusive. After a general statement in relation to the academic problem, the chapter starts its study from the etymology of the term, followed by the implications of the two main definitions of *kāya*, namely, 'body' and 'collection.' The chapter then lists and provides examples for various aspects of the term in the senses of collection and body, in order to give an overall picture regarding the use of the term in early Bddhist texts. It discusses also the use of the term *kāya* in specific situations, particularly in meditation and when it is associated with supranatural power. Finually, the discussion in this chapter will provide a criterion for further justification of the import and appropriate definitions of the term *kāya* in the specific compound *dhammakāya*, as will be studied in the fourth chapter.

The fourth chapter contains a documentation of all occurrences of the term *dhammakāya* in the Pali canon. It first lists all possible translations of the term *dhammakāya* from a linguistic aspect. The chapter then documents and discusses, one after another, all occurrences of the term as found in the Pali canon. It analyses each of those occurrences according to its surrounding context. This is done against the early Buddhist philosophy as is evident in the canon. The chapter analyses and discusses also certain neglected points which were overlooked by most scholars. It evaluates all possible definitions of the term *dhammakāya* according to the context of the occurrence being discussed, in order to consider the most appropriate definition of the term in each occurrence. The significance of *dhammakāya* is determined in relation to different types of Buddhist nobles. The occurrences of *dhammakāya* (*fa-shen*) in the Chinese *Āgama*s and in the Buddhist hybrid Sanskrit are employed also as supplementary information. The chapter finally determines the relative value of its two components, namely, *dhamma* and *kāya*, and then makes a conclusion of its study as regards the appropriate interpretations and significance of the term in early Buddhism.

The fifth chapter summarises the whole course of the present study. It restates briefly the academic questions, as well as their corresponding evidence and discussion. It will then make a final conclusion with respect to the significance of the *dhammakāya* in early Buddhist usage according to the information and analyses performed in the three main chapters. The significance of the term *dhammakāya* will be determined in regard to two aspects: its philosophical and soteriological significance. Finally, the chapter will attempt to indicate how further research may be conducted in order to fulfil a more complete picture of the *dhammakāya* in early Buddhist thought.

From the overview and methodology described above, the study now begins its exploration, analysis, and discussion in regard to relevant aspects of the first component of the Pali term *dhammakāya*, namely, '*dhamma*.'

Chapter 2
EARLY BUDDHIST *DHAMMA*

Introduction

This second chapter studies the meanings and usages of the term *dhamma* in early Buddhism. As was mentioned in the introductory chapter, the omissions present in previous scholarly interpretations of *dhammakāya* involve the interpretation of its two components, namely, *dhamma* and *kāya*. With respect to the interpretations of the former, the problems are related mainly to confusion or an over-generalisation of the term *dhamma* as used in different contexts. This owes largely to the ambiguous nature of the word *dhamma* itself. This chapter studies its various usages in order to explain the relations and distinction of the term *dhamma* used in different contexts and to re-evaluate previous interpretations of the term in Pali passages which are usually cited as references to *dhammakāya*.

In doing so, the chapter will start from an etymological study of the term, followed by a review of previous attempts to elucidate its meanings. The review aims mainly to demonstrate the complicated nature of the Buddhist *dhamma*. Afterward, the chapter will employ a particular classification to accommodate various meanings and usages of the term, as relevant to this study. It will then discuss some rarely mentioned aspects of early Buddhist *dhamma* which are germane to the interpretation of *dhammakāya*. The different contexts in which '*dhamma*' is used will be addressed according to the relevance of the term to the process of enlightenment. Finally, the chapter will discuss the relation of the Buddha and *dhamma* as present in two Pali passages which are usually cited as being references to *dhammakāya*.

The chapter will now begin its study with the etymology and historical settings of the term.

Etymology and Historical Background

According to tradition and to linguistic analysis, the term *dhamma* (Skt. *dharma*) is a masculine or neuter noun said to derive from the root *dhṛ*, meaning 'to hold,' 'to bear,' 'to support' or 'to sustain.'[176] Childers remarks that its neuter form is rarely found in Buddhist usage.[177]

The term *dhamma* is one among many terms that Buddhism shares with other Indian traditions, particularly Brahmanism**.** We are told that it has a long history within Indian philosophy, and that its Buddhist usage is inherited from its Vedic ancestry. For example, Gethin claims that the plural *dhamma*s in Buddhism is inherited directly from Vedic usage.[178] Hirakawa, likewise, claims that the notion of 'truth' associated with the term is inherited from non-Buddhist *dharma* in that it possesses an enduring quality.[179] Halbfass suggests that the later use of the term *dharma* as the constituents of experience, or elements of existence, originates in its Vedic senses of maintenance and separation.[180] Horsch draw a similar line of development demonstrating that the Buddhist doctrine of dependent causation is inherited from its Vedic use in the sense of world law. [181]

Nevertheless, some recent studies of the notions it evokes in ancient Indian literature suggest that its centrality, as is well known in Buddhism and Hinduism alike, was perhaps established no earlier than the early Buddhist

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[176] Rin-chen-grub Bu-ston and Eugene Obermiller, *The Jewelry of Scripture*, 2nd ed., Bibliotheca Indo-Buddhica ; No. 42 (Delhi, India: Sri Satguru Publications, 1987), p. 18, based on the explication in Vasubandhu's *Vyākhyāyukti*. Cf. T. W. Rhys Davids and William Stede, *The Pali Text Society's Pali-English Dictionary* (London: The Pali Text Society, 1921-1925), p. 335.

[177] Robert Caesar Childers, *A Dictionary of the Pali Language* (London: Trubner & Co., 1875), p. 118a.

Here, Childers notes that, in the PTS version of the Pali *Tipiṭaka*, only nine occurrences of the neuter plural form (*dhammāni*) are found; one in the *Saṃyutta-nikāya* and eight in the *Khuddaka-nikāya*.

[178] Gethin, "He Who Sees Dhamma Sees Dhammas," op. cit., p. 531.

[179] Akira Hirakawa and Paul Groner, *A History of Indian Buddhism: From Sakyamuni to Early Mahāyāna*, Asian Studies at Hawaii ; No. 36. ([Honolulu]: University of Hawaii Press, 1990), p. 46.

[180] Wilhelm Halbfass, *On Being and What There Is: Classical Vaisesika and the History of Indian Ontology* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992), p. 32.

[181] Paul Horsch, "From Creation Myth to World Law: The Early History of Dharma," *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 32, no. 5-6 (2004): 423-448, 438.

period.[182] In pre-Buddhist traditions, the term was used much less frequently and in less complicated senses. For example, Brereton's exhaustive study[183] of the term *dhárman*[184] in the *Ṛgveda* concludes that the use of the term was first developed in the *Ṛgvedic* period, when it had not yet established a concrete or consistent affiliation. He suggests that the term does not have a long history prior to the time of the *Ṛgveda* and that there is no evidence of its cultural importance during the Indo-Iranian period. Brereton interprets its moderate number of occurrences as an indication of its non-centrality in this period.[185] In support of Brereton's conclusion, Olivelle's study of the use of the term *dharma* or *dharman* in the middle and late Vedic period[186] reveals the direct development of the term's notions in a juridical-ethical sense from the later *Ṛgvedic* period down to the time of the *Atharva-Veda* and *Yajur-Veda*. At the same time, it notes also the new usages of the term emerging in certain *Brāhmaṇa*, *Āraṇyaka*, and *Upaniṣad*s either as 'specific attribute' or 'thing(s),' or having the sense of 'morality.'[187] Olivelle interprets the two lines of semantic development of the term *dharma* as an indication of Vedic-Buddhist mutual interaction. While some scholars think that Buddhists have taken those

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[182] Patrick Olivelle, "Introduction," *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 32, no. 5-6 (2004): 421-422.

[183] Joel P. Brereton, "Dharman in the Ṛgveda," *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 32, no. 5-6 (2004): 449 - 489.

[184] Also found in the *Ṛgveda* are *dharmán*, *dhárīman*, and compounds constituted of the term such as *dharmakṛt*, *satyádharman*, and *dhármavant*. All these are thoroughly studied in Brereton's work.

[185] Based his work strictly on such a primary meaning, Brereton renders the use of *Ṛgvedic dhárman* in five different ways, arranged according to their chronological orders. All meanings arranged are inter-connected and related to the basic meaning, as a support or foundation:

1. *Dhárman* signifies the sacrifice or ritual as a foundation both of the world and of an individual.

2. *Dhárman* signifies either the divine rites or sacrificial fire as being the foundation of human rites.

3. *Dhárman* signifies the universal or physical foundation, namely, the earth and heaven which are said to be the foundations of lives (RV 10.16.3). The fire and the sun, said to provide the basis for earthly lives and heaven respectively, also represent *dhárman* in this sense.

4. *Dhárman* signifies the particular characters of some individual gods, such as Soma's supporting nature, Mitra's alliance, Savitar's compelling, Ādityas's royalty, and Varuṇa's command or ruling authority.

5. *Dhárman* as the foundation created by sovereign gods. According to different nature of individual gods, the foundation or *dhárman* they provide to the society are different. For example, Soma provides wealth, while Varuṇa and Mitra are said to impose command on the society or the world that will keep it in order.

This latter notion of *Ṛgvedic dhárman* is said to be the antecedent of kingship as 'royal authority' in later Indian traditions.

[186] Patrick Olivelle, "The Semantic History of Dharma the Middle and Late Vedic Periods," *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 32, no. 5-6 (2004): 491-511.

[187] Ibid., referring to certain passages such as *ŚB* 11.5.7.1, BU.1.4.14, CU.2.23.1.

developed concepts of *dharman* from Vedic literature,[188] Olivelle thinks it is unlikely that the Buddhists have adopted the fully developed concept of *dharma* from Vedic sources. Some newly emerging concepts of *dharma* in the late Vedic literature are more likely to be the consequence of Buddhist influence. In other words, some specific usages of the term are characteristically Buddhist. Similarly, Bronkhorst believes that the usage of *dharma* as elements of existence is characteristically Buddhist, and the result of scholastic development in the north-west region of India.[189]

While a number of scholars have delineated the possible historical development of Buddhist *dhamma*, their findings reveal also particular notions of Buddhist *dhamma* which are distinct from its usages in other Indian traditions.[190] Therefore, in what follows, the chapter will study the notions of *dhamma* in the early Buddhist texts themselves; because whatever usages of the term employed therein, whether or not they are inherited from pre-Buddhist traditions, all come to be understood within the border of the early Buddhist context. They then represent the 'early Buddhist *dhamma*.'

Before going into the study of Buddhist texts themselves, the chapter will first appreciate previous scholarly attempts to elucidate the meanings of this important term.

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[188] For example, see Horch, op. cit.; Wilhelm Geiger, "Dhamma Und Brahman," op. cit.

[189] Bronkhorst, "Some Uses of Dharma in Classical Indian Philosophy," op. cit., pp. 733-734.

[190] For example of further information, see Ibid.; Gethin, "He Who Sees Dhamma Sees Dhammas," op. cit.

Bronkhorst, while outlining the development of the Buddhist use of *dharma* as 'element of existence,' states, "…within the brahmanical philosophies the word *dharma* is not used as in Buddhism," and "…there is nothing noteworthy in the concept of *dharma* in the brahmanical philosophical systems." (pp. 734-735).

Gethin, differentiating the singular and plural uses of *dhamma*, argues that early Buddhism inherited the plural usage *dhamma*s from pre-Buddhist tradition, and that the singular usage as teaching is the direct development from there. Yet, he still notes some distictive Buddhist character of *dhamma*, "…the manner in which the notion of *dhamma* functions as a pervasive concept of religious, philosophical and ethical discourse is perhaps characteristically Buddhist.…" (p. 532).

Review of Previous Studies

Attempts to Elucidate the Meaning of the Buddhist term *Dhamma*

Among all Buddhist terms, the term *dhamma* is one of the most frequently found in the canon. Carter, in his article regarding traditional meanings of the term, considers it to be the most puzzling and comprehensive technical term within the Theravāda Buddhist writings.[191] Scholars agree that this term constitutes the central conception of the Buddhist teachings.[192] The variation of its meanings is supposed to cover almost the totality of the 'highly complicated system' of the Buddhist religion.

For longer than a century, scholars have tried to find an English translation which will cover the whole range of meanings of Buddhist *dhamma*. As Carter's survey suggests,[193] Western academics have proposed many single translations of the term. According to Mrs Rhys Davids, the term had long been translated as 'norm,' a linguistic tradition which she adopted in all of her early translations. Once the translators realised that *dhamma* in religious usage should have meant more than that, they introduce further notions such as 'duty' and 'conscience.' As Mrs Rhys Davids points out, the 'force of the ought' or the 'urge of the forward' should be added to its translation, rather than the mere stillness of 'maintaining' as in the Vedic use of the term.[194] Horner, a talented student of Mrs. Rhys Davids, seems to share the same view with her teacher in

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[191] John Ross Carter, "Traditional Definitions of the Term Dhamma," *Philosophy East and West* 26, no. 3 (1976): 329-337, 329.

[192] For example, see Th. Stcherbatsky, *The Central Conception of Buddhism* (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1923), p. 1, referring to Magdalene und Wilhelm Geiger, *Pali Dhamma,* op. cit. No page number is provided.

Herein, Stcherbatsky agrees with the Geigers in regard to the centrality of the term within Buddhist usage.

[193] Carter, *Dhamma*, op. cit., pp. 4-53.

[194] Caroline A. F. Rhys Davids, "Introduction," in *The Book of Gradual Sayings, Vol.1*, ed. F.L. Woodward (London: Pali Text Society, 1979).

her writing on the philosophical importance of early Buddhist *dhamma*.[195] A similar argument is repeated in her other works.[196]

In his introduction to Indian Buddhism, the older Burnouf proposed that *dhamma* should be translated as 'the law' to which many kinds of beings resort as their refuge. It is one of the three refuges, along with the Buddha and the Sangha.[197] Thomas employs the same translation, provided with the reason that 'law' is much wider than 'morality' and that it could encompass also pre-Buddhistic usages.[198]

Hardy, writing on the Eastern monachism, offers the alternative translation of 'the truth,' which he considers a more appropriate expression for the Buddhist *dhamma*.[199] T. W. Rhys Davids expresses a similar opinion,[200] while attempting to render the term *dhamma* in the compound *dhammacakka* 'the wheel of *dhamma*.' He argues that the translation 'law' is inappropriate for Buddhist *dhamma*, as it usually points to the brahmanical ceremony, the essence of which the Buddha rejects. He argues that, in this particular compound, it is best to translate the term as 'truth' or 'righteousness.'

Oldenberg, in a biography of the Buddha which includes his teaching and its propagation, suggests that the term *dhamma*, which generally means 'order, law' in Vedic or pre-Buddhist usage, comes to have the meaning of 'nature'

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[195] Horner, "Early Buddhist Dhamma," op. cit., p. 115.

[196] For example, see I. B. Horner, *The Early Buddhist Theory of Man Perfected: A Study of the Arahan Concept and of the Implications of the Aim to Perfection in Religious Life, Traced in Early Canonical and Post-Canonical Pali Literature* (Amsterdam: Philo Press, 1975), p. 48.

Herein, Horner states, *"*In early Śākya *dhamma* correspond to the *"*moral ought,*"* the moral, inner guide by which man recognised the divinity immanent within him, the will toward the highest, toward the right. This highest, this right, was *Dhamma."* This statement, on the one hand, confirms her sharing of idea with that of Mrs Rhys Davids. On the other hand, it demonstrates different levels of *dhamma* used in early Buddhist texts, as she understands it. In her statement, the first '*dhamma*' represents 'moral driving force' or human 'inner guide.' The last represents 'the highest' which she distinguishes from the first occurrence by means of capitalisation of the term, '*Dhamma*.'

[197] Eugène Burnouf, *Introduction a l'histoire du Buddhisme indien*, t. 1. ed. (Paris,: Imprimerie royale, 1844), p. 80.

[198] Carter, *Dhamma*, op. cit., p.27 referring to Edward Joseph Thomas, *The Life of Buddha as Legend and History* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1960), n. 1, p. 174; Edward Joseph Thomas, *The History of Buddhist Thought* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1959), n. 2, p. 13.

[199] R. Spence Hardy, *Eastern Monachism: An Account of the Origin, Laws, Discipline, Sacred Writings, Mysterious Rites, Religious Ceremonies, and Present Circumstances, of the Order of Mendicants Founded by Gotama Budha* (London: Williams and Norgate, 1860), p. 167.

[200] T. W. Rhys Davids, *Buddhism: Being a Sketch of the Life and Teachings of Gautama, the Buddha* (London,: 1878), p.45.

and 'concept' in a Buddhist context. It thus signifies the doctrine or the truth.[201] Warren[202] and Thomas[203] share the same idea, rendering the term as 'doctrine' whenever it refers to Buddhist teachings. Likewise, Horner refers also to *dhamma* as the 'body of doctrine' which is collected in the *Sutta-piṭaka*.[204] Gombrich similarly relates the translation of *dhamma* as 'doctrine' to its pre-Buddhist notion as Truth and Law:

> The word *Dhamma* is variously translated into English. In so far as it is what the Buddhas teach, the intellectual content of Buddhism, it is aptly translated 'Doctrine.' This doctrine both describes and prescribes, so it is both 'Truth' and 'Law.'[205]

While these meanings appear appropriate, they require further explanation if they are meant to cover all of the term's occurrences.[206]

Up to this point, we have acknowledged a variety of scholarly definitions of the Pali term *dhamma*. It can be understood as truth, doctrine or teaching, norm, law, duty, conscience, righteousness, nature, concept, and so on.

Due to its wide range of uses, scholars perhaps finally agree that no one single translation is sufficient in rendering the term *dhamma* in all of its occurrences, as Warren states, '[E]ach of them means so many things … their ground meaning is not translatable into English, being expressive of a different philosophy.'[207] Likewise, Mrs Rhys Davids, in her expression of the difficulty the pioneering translators have faced in translating the Pali *Tipiṭaka* into English, states that '*dhamma*' is one of the most undeterminable terms in the

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[201] Hermann Oldenberg, *Buddha, Sein Leben, Seine Lehre, Seine Gemeinde*, [13. Aufl. ed. (Stuttgart]: Cotta Verlag, 1959), p. 256.

[202] H. C. Warren, *Buddhism in Translations*, Harvard Oriental Series. (Cambridge, Mass.: [s.n.], 1896), p. 116.

[203] Thomas, *The Life of Buddha as Legend and History*, op. cit., n. 1, p. 174; Thomas, *The History of Buddhist Thought*, op. cit., n. 2, p. 13.

[204] Horner, "Early Buddhist Dhamma," op. cit., p. 115.

[205] Richard F. Gombrich, *Theravāda Buddhism: A Social History from Ancient Benares to Modern Colombo*, Library of Religious Beliefs and Practices. (London ; New York: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1988), p. 2.

[206] Mrs Rhys Davids's proposed definition as 'thing' also falls into the same condition. See Caroline A. F. Rhys Davids, "Notices of Books, a Review of Pali Dhamma: Vornehmlich in Der Kanonischen Literatur Von Magdalene Und Wilhelm Geiger," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1924): 673-675.

[207] Warren, op. cit., p.116.

rendering of Buddhist texts.[208] Similarly, in her decision to discuss only one aspect of the philosophical position of the term *dhamma*, Horner states:

> *Dhamma* is thus a word of several meanings or shades of meaning. These often tend to slide into one another, so that it is not always possible to say that in any particular passage only one meaning is intended, and, if so, which one.'[209]

The same is claimed for the Sanskrit *dharma*. For instance, while attempting to demonstrate the difficulties to determine the term's interpretations in different Buddhist traditions, Conze explains, 'Frequently it is not at all easy to determine which one of these various meanings is intended in a given case.'[210] Thus, some scholars considered it wise to leave the term untranslated.[211]

As an alternative, a number of scholars offer instead either preferred classifications or lists of its possible meanings, hoping to encompass its wide range of definitions and to make the term comprehensible. The following section contains a review of those scholarly works.

Classifications of Meanings of the Pali Term *Dhamma*

As a means to comprehend the meanings of the word *dhamma*, instead of trying to encompass all of its uses with a single English translation, some scholars provide lists and/or classifications of its meanings. Even this task is said to be difficult; it is not easy to assign a category of meanings which is appropriate for each of the term's occurrences since the meanings in different categories tend to overlap each other.[212] Owing to its complexity, most scholars employ the aid of traditional commentaries to define this term. In this respect, commentators are regarded as 'scholars' of antiquity who attempted to interpret

[208] Rhys Davids, "Introduction," op. cit., p. vii.

[209] Horner, "Early Buddhist Dhamma," op. cit., p. 115.

[210] Edward Conze, *Buddhist Thought in India* (London: George, Allen & Unwin, 1962), p. 94.

[211] Mrs Rhys Davids, "Introduction," op. cit., pp. vii-viii; Horner, "Early Buddhist Dhamma," op. cit., p.115.

[212] Geigers, *Pali Dhamma*, op. cit., p. 10: "Dazu kommt schliesslich noch, dass die verschiedenen Bedeutungen so unmerklich in einander uebergehen, dass es immer wieder mehr oder weniger dem subjektiven Empfinden ueberlassen ist, welche Uebersetzung als die passendste erscheint."

and elaborate on the meanings of the early Buddhist *dhamma*, in the same way as modern scholars do.

Principal scholarly works providing a thorough investigation of the Pali term *dhamma* are those of Magdalene and Wilhelm Geiger and of John Ross Carter.[213] The former are the pioneers who started a thorough investigation of the term as presented in the Pali canon and a few Pali commentaries as accessible in their time. The latter continues the investigation into all Pali commentaries and traditional Sinhalese scriptures. Later, probably as a response to previous scholarly attempts, Gethin proposes a comprehensive classification, with a particular approach related to the connected usage of the singular and plural *dhamma*(s). Other than that, some Pali-English dictionaries offer a variety of different classifications of meanings of Buddhist *dhamma*.

In his Pali-English dictionary, Childers[214] classifies twenty translations of the word *dhamma* into ten groups. These can be definitions of both the masculine form (*dhammo*) and the neuter form (*dhammaṃ*). The ten groups are as follows:

1) nature, condition, quality, property, characteristic
2) function, practice, duty
3) object, thing, idea, phenomenon
4) doctrine
5) law
6) virtue, piety
7) justice
8) the law or Truth of Buddha
9) the Buddhist scriptures
10) religion

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[213] Geigers, *Pali Dhamma*, op. cit.; Carter, *Dhamma*, op. cit.

[214] Childers, op. cit., p. 118a.

Later, T. W. Rhys Davids and William Stede, also in their Pali-English dictionary,[215] mention two sets of fourfold meaning of *dhamma* depicted in the Pali commentaries on the *Dīgha-nikāya*, *Dhammapada* and the *Dhamma-saṅgaṇī*.[216] Based on these two sets of definitions, they then suggest the corresponding interpretations of those definitions as 1) doctrine, 2) right or righteousness, 3) condition, and 4) phenomenon.[217]

The Geigers employ also these two sets of fourfold meaning in their well-known work on this single term.[218] The approach of their work is, according to what they state**,** purely philological. Having drawn almost all cases of the term from the Pali canon, they thoroughly explore the usages of the term *dhamma* throughout the canon. Aided by the commentaries available at that time, they list five commentarial definitions[219] as follows:

1) *guṇa* – Eigenschaft, Fähigkeit, Tugend (character, nature, attribute, capacity, quality, property / ability, efficiency, accomplishment, power, faculty / goodness, virtue)
2) *desanā* – Lehre, Predigt (doctrine, teaching, tenet / sermon)
3) *hetu* – Ursache (causation, reason)
4) *pariyatti* – Heiliger, kanonischer Text (sacred, canonical text)

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[215] Rhys Davids and Stede, op. cit., pp. 235-236.

[216] The fourfold meaning of *dhamma* given in DA and DhA comprises the following:

1) *guṇa*	good conduct
2) *desanā*	preaching
3) *pariyatti*	scripture and
4) *nissatta*	the non-animated cosmic law.

Another set given in DhsA is as follows:

1) *pariyatti*	doctrines as formulated
2) *hetu*	condition or causal antecedent
3) *guṇa*	moral quality or action and
4) *nissatta-nijjīva*	the phenomenal.

[217] Ibid., pp. 335b-336a.

[218] Geigers, *Pali Dhamma*, op. cit., p. 4.

[219] Three of the four meanings of *dhamma* given in these two sets of commentaries are the same, yielding five different meanings in total as listed by the Geigers.

5) *nissatta-nijjīva* – Unbelebtes, Ding, Sache (the inanimate / things, entity / affair, matter, thing, case)

Having listed these commentarial definitions, to which they provide slightly broader translations than those given in PTSD, the Geigers also note that those meanings are by no means exhaustive.[220] Nevertheless, they consider the five categories as encompassing the principal meanings of the term *dhamma*.[221]

Afterward, they suggest more than fifty German translations of the single term, provided with the quotes of corresponding passages from the Pali canon. These translations are grouped into four sets of meanings:

a) *Gesetz*	law, including norm, right, and rules
b) *Lehre*	teaching, including *dhamma* as one of the three refuges
c) *Wahrheit*	truth, including the true teaching
d) *Ding*	thing, including entity and physical or mental objects, states, or phenomena

In discussing the notions related to Buddhist usage of the term *dhamma*, the Geigers note the parallel notions of the Buddhist *dhamma* and the brahmanical *brahman*. They emphasise the Buddha's full intention in promoting the term *dhamma* to replace the concept of the old brahmanical *brahman*.[222]

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[220] Ibid., p. 4.

[221] Carter, *Dhamma*, op. cit., p. 11, referring to Geigers, *Pali Dhamma*, op. cit., p.4.

[222] Ibid., op. cit., p. 71.

Wilhelm Geiger elaborates this further in his article published in the following year. See Geiger, "Dhamma Und Brahman," op. cit. In the article, he outlines a brief account regarding the development of notions of this ceremonially significant term in Vedic usages. According to him, *dharman* has a close relation to '*ṛta*' or '*vrata*,' meaning 'law' or 'norm,' in *Ṛgvedic* period. Its notion has undergone a line of development through the later Vedas down to the *Brāhmaṇa*s and *Āraṇyaka*s. Geiger believes that the Buddha has taken the term *dhamma* (*dharma*) - when it was connected with the imagination of something great, exalted, and all-embracing - to replace the old '*brahman*' which was central to *Upaniṣadic* thought. Thus, *dhamma* has become the most transcendent term in Buddhist thought, being the pure spiritual power, cosmically and ethically - the highest impersonal being.

A number of later scholars express their appreciation of this same point. For example, Conze, in his discussion of the *dhamma* in which Buddhists take refuge, states that *dhamma* in this case occupies a similar position to that of *ātman* and *brahman* in some Hindu traditions. Conze, *Buddhist Thought in India*, op. cit., p.93. Likewise, Horner suggests an identification of early Buddhist *dhamma* with the *Upaniṣadic ātman-brahman*, supported by many parallel usages of '*dhamma-*' and '*brahma-*' found in the Pali canon. Horner, "Early Buddhist Dhamma," op. cit., pp.116-117.

A detailed review of scholarly comments on this issue is made in Carter, *Dhamma*, op. cit., pp. 33-38.

Half a century later, Carter provides further documentation on the notions of this Pali term, both those proposed in western academic studies and those elaborated in the Pali and Sinhalese Buddhist commentaries.[223] His work adopts a 'broadly religious' approach, as Gethin correctly observes.[224]

In addition to the five definitions provided in DA, DhA, and DhsA, as the Geigers and PTSD employed, Carter lists another set of meanings elaborated in the commentary to the *Majjhima-nikāya*, noting also that it is more comprehensive than the lists offered previously.[225] The meaning offered in MA is tenfold. The word '*ādi* (etcetera)' provided at the end indicates that the list is not meant to be exhaustive; it contains only the principal meanings.[226]

Pulling together the definitions listed in all the above mentioned commentaries and the commentary on the *Buddhavaṃsa*, he lists sixteen commentarial definitions of the term *dhamma* in total. He adds also *ādi* (etcetera) after the list, as mentioned in four of the five commentaries utilised.[227] An additional meaning given in BuA, which is not provided in the earlier cited commentaries, is *catusaccadhamma*, '*dhamma* that pertains to the four truths.'[228]

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[223] Carter, *Dhamma*, op. cit.,

[224] Gethin, "He Who Sees Dhamma Sees Dhammas," op. cit., p. 515.

[225] Carter, *Dhamma*, op. cit., pp. 58-59.

[226] The ten definitions proposed are:

1. *pariyatti*	authoritative teaching; that to be thoroughly learned, memorised, mastered.
2. *sacca*	truth; to be seen and known
3. *samādhi*	rapt concentration; the middle element of the threefold path comprising virtue, concentration, and wisdom
4. *paññā*	wisdom
5. *pakati*	natural condition, normal state, or normal recurrence
6. *sabhāva*	inherent nature such as wholesomeness
7. *suññatā*	voidness
8. *puñña*	merit, meritorious activities or behaviour
9. *āpatti*	an offence, with regard to the monastic discipline, committed within the Sangha
10. *ñeyya*	that to be known

Carter notes also the limitation of the English translations which are provided along with these Pali commentarial accounts, that they cannot really be a full expression of the Pali definitions.

[227] Etcetera is added in the DA, DhsA, MA, and BuA. Only the DhA omits it.

[228] Carter, *Dhamma*, op. cit., pp. 63-64.

Abhidhānappadīpikā, a Pali lexicon probably written in the twelfth century, adds *ñāya* (proper manner, propriety), *ācāra* (proper conduct), and *kāraṇa* (reason, cause) to the definitions mentioned above.[229]

According to Carter, most of the traditional Sinhalese definitions of the term differ insignificantly from those given in the Pali commentaries.[230] However, they add some interesting notions to those already listed. For example, the *Dharmapradīpikā*, an early Sinhalese Buddhist text probably composed around 1200 AD as a commentary on the Pali *Mahābodhivaṃsa*, adds the meaning *vyavahāraya* (that which is customary or proper). With regard to the phrase '*diṭṭhadhamma pattadhamma*' (having seen the *dhamma*, having attained the *dhamma*) in the Pali passages, the *Dharmapradīpikā* identifies *dhamma* as 'paths, fruits, and *nibbāna*.' This is slightly different from MA which refers to a similar phrase '*diṭṭhadhamma viditadhamma*' (having seen the *dhamma*, having known the *dhamma*), and defines *dhamma* as 'truth.' To this, Carter thinks that the *Dharmapradīpikā*'s elaboration is more comprehensive.[231]

As to the compound *evaṃdhamma* which appears between the compound *evaṃsīla* and *evaṃpaññā*, while Pali commentaries consistently define *dhamma* in this compound as '*samādhi*,' the *Dharmapradīpikā* renders it just as 'nature.'[232] This gives the translation of the full compound as 'having such nature' or 'of such nature.'[233]

The *Abhidhānappadīpikāsūci*, the Sinhalese commentary on the Pali *Abhidhānappadīpikā,* adds six more definitions: 1) '*vikāra*' constitution,

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[229] Carter, *Dhamma*, op. cit., p.139-140.

[230] Carter, "Traditional Definitions of the Term Dhamma," op. cit., p. 332.

[231] Carter, *Dhamma*, op. cit., p. 137.

[232] Here, the passage refers to the qualities of the Buddha stating that he is of such *sīla*, *dhamma*, and *paññā*. The Pali commentaries, equating this with the threefold path (*dhammakkhandha*), conclude that the term *dhamma* in this passage has to do with *samādhi*. The *Dharmapradīpikā* differs on this point. It renders *dhamma* simply as nature, in elaborating the content of the passage where the Buddha is said to be of such a nature.

[233] Ibid., pp. 137-138.

quality, 2) '*paccaya*' condition, 3) '*paccayuppanna*' that which has arisen conditionally, 4) '*visaya*' object, 5) '*yutti*' custom, and 6) '*nibbāna*.'[234]

The *Srīsumaṅgala Sabdakoṣa*, the admirable Sinhalese dictionary written around the year 1950s, adds '*ārayamārga*' the noble path, '*tripiṭakapāliya*' the texts that are the *Tripiṭaka*, '*sucaritaya*' good conduct, and '*buddhabhāṣitaya*' that which was spoken by the Buddha.[235]

Having included these additional meanings, Carter finally lists 34 traditional definitions of the Pali *dhamma*. Again, '*ādi'* is included as the final meaning to indicate that the list is not exhaustive.[236] Some of these meanings appear very similar.[237] The meanings listed are as follows:

1. *buddhabhāṣita*	that which was spoken by the Buddha
2. *guṇa*	virtuous, moral quality
3. *desanā*	teaching
4. *pariyatti*	authoritative teaching, texts
5. *nissatta*	that without a living being (or, that which is not a living being)
6. *nissatta-nijjīvatā*	that without a living being - lifelessness
7. *suññatā*	emptiness, voidness
8. *hetu*	cause
9. *saccāni*	truths
10. *catusaccadhamma*	*dhamma* that pertains to the four noble truths
11. *sacca*	truth
12. *samādhi*	rapt concentration

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234 Ibid., p. 156.

235 Ibid., p. 156.

In this paragraph, the technical terms are written in Sanskrit, instead of Pali. This follows Carter's original paper which employs Sanskrit terms when referring to Sinhalese references.

236 Ibid., pp. 157-9.

237 For example, *kāraṇa* is usually used in the Pali commentarial tradition as synonymous with *hetu* 'cause.' It seems that their meanings cannot be entirely separated. The same applies to *sacca*, *saccāni*, and *catusaccadhamma*, meaning 'truth,' 'truths,' and 'the *dhamma* which is the four truths.'

13. *paññā*	wisdom
14. *pakati*	natural condition
15. *sabhāva*	inherent nature
16. *puññā*	merit
17. *āpatti*	an offence committed within the *Saṅgha*
18. *ñeyya*	that to be known
19. *ñāya*	proper manner, propriety
20. *ācāra*	[proper] conduct
21. *kāraṇa*	reason, cause
22. *maggaphalanibbāna*	paths, fruits, and *nibbāna*
23. *ariyamagga*	noble path
24. *vyavahāra*	that which is customary
25. *kusaladhamma*	wholesome *dhamma*
26. *vikāra*	constitution, quality
27. *paccaya*	condition
28. *paccayasamuppanna*	that which has arisen conditionally
29. *visaya*	object
30. *yutti*	custom, fitness
31. *nibbāna*	*nibbāna*
32. *tripiṭakapāli*	the texts that are the three *piṭakas*
33. *sucarita*	good behavior, good conduct
34. *ādi*	etcetera

A recent study by Gethin[238] provides a comprehensive analysis of the term *dhamma* as used in the Pali canon. Gethin's main focus is on the affinity between the different meanings of the term *dhamma* and the relationship between its Buddhist and earlier Vedic uses. Having referred briefly to previous scholarly discussions, he offers six basic meanings,[239] claiming that

[238] Gethin, "He Who Sees Dhamma Sees Dhammas," op. cit.

[239] Ibid., pp. 515-516.

they constitute a consensus between scholars on the meanings of the term *dhamma* in the early Buddhist usage:

1) the teachings of the Buddha and the texts which contain them, in both oral and written forms

2) good conduct or behaviour, righteous and lawful behaviour, wholesome deeds, Buddhist practice that finally constitutes the Buddhist path. This includes also 'conduct' in a neutral sense

3) the truth about the reality directly realised and taught by the Buddha

4) nature, characteristic, quality, natural condition. This is a general rendition of *dhamma* as the last constituent of a *bahubbīhi* compound, such as *samudayadhamma,* 'having arising as its nature' or 'whose nature is to arise'

5) the underlying natural law discerned by the Buddha

6) a mental or physical state or thing

He later goes on to list eighteen meanings of *dhamma* provided in six Pali commentaries, five of which are utilized by Carter. Four extra meanings proposed in the additional commentary on the *Paṭisambhidāmagga* are 1) '*paññatti*' concept, 2) '*vikāra*' disposition, 3) '*paccaya*' causal condition, 4) '*paccayuppanna*' arisen from a causal condition. Gethin then groups the eighteen meanings by way of five principal meanings which correspond to the six basic meanings listed above,[240] except number 5 'natural law,' probably because none of the eighteen commentarial definitions fits into this particular category.

From an historical point of view, having delineated the usage of the term from the *Ṛgvedic* period, Gethin concludes that the plural usage '*dhamma*s' in early Buddhism is inherited from its Vedic usage in the sense of 'duty' or 'that

[240] Ibid., pp. 521-526.

should be performed/done,' i.e., sacrificial rites that maintain or support the cosmos or society. But its meaning has changed from the elements of Vedic ritual practice to the practices or appropriate behaviours prescribed under the Buddha's authority. In this manner, the meaning of *dhamma*(s) as 'prescribed practices' is a straightforward development from Vedic to early Buddhist thought. Similarly, as something's 'duty' or 'function' is related to its 'nature' or 'quality,' the meaning of *dhamma* as 'basic physical or mental qualities that constitute experience' found in the early Buddhist usage is also inherited from Vedic *dharma* in the sense of 'foundational nature.' Gethin thus concludes that *dhamma* in the sense of 'teaching,' both in its prescriptive and descriptive aspects, derives from its pre-Buddhist notions while being adjusted to specific Buddhist usages.[241] On the relationship between *dhamma* in the prescriptive and that in the descriptive sense, Gethin makes the following comment:

> The relevance of this in the present context is that, if the distinction between nature and norm is not made in the first place, because a deep connection between the two is assumed, then there can be no *explicit* argument that attempts to link the two.[242]

In this manner, Gethin ties all usages of the term *dhamma* together in a logical way, especially its notion in the sense of doctrine or teaching.

While Gethin's proposed classification appears conclusive or perhaps representative of a scholarly consensus on the issue, as he states, it may be anticipated that future studies will continue to propose other forms of categorisation more appropriate to their approaches, for different classifications might be considered more or less effective according to the different approaches aimed by different authors.

In any case, what emerges most clearly from the previous research on the Pali term *dhamma* is its wide range of usage which perhaps covers the totality of Buddhist philosophy, and is thus not easy to encompass. This study, on the one hand, has evinced a number of possible definitions of '*dhamma*' in the Pali

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[241] Ibid., p. 534.

[242] Ibid., p. 535.

canon. On the other hand, it has observed the nuances in the various ways that the term is employed in early Buddhist texts. This partly affirms that the generalisation of '*dhamma*' in different instances, if it must be done, must be done with care.

Besides the study of the Pali *dhamma*, scholars studied also the word *dharma*[243] in texts of other early Buddhist schools, mainly the Sarvāstivāda, as will be reviewed in the following section.

Studies of the Sarvāstivāda Notions of *Dharma*

The sources of academic studies of Sarvāstivāda *dharma* are slightly different from those of the Pali *dhamma*. While the main sources of the Pali studies are the canon and its commentaries, the studies of the term's notions in the Sarvāstivāda tradition are based mainly on traditional *abhidharma* literature such as the *Mahāvibhāṣā* and Vasubandhu's exegeses. Possibly the reason for this is the accessibility of the sources employed. Likewise, while the studies of Pali *dhamma* deal broadly with all possible connotations of the term, the studies of the Sarvāstivāda *dharma* mainly attempt to account for its usage as 'element of existence' and its historical development. Nevertheless, both of them similarly employ the aid of traditional exegeses to clarify the connotations of the term. In other words, while a number of scholars study the Pali *dhamma* with the help of Pali and Sinhalese commentaries, others study the Sanskrit *dharma* with the assistance of traditional commentaries either in Sanskrit, Chinese, or Tibetan.

Stcherbatsky, for example, on investigating Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośa*, expresses the view that the only real meaning of Buddhist *dharma* is 'element of existence.' Only these atomic, irreducible, elements are realities. All others

[243] Besides the Theravāda canonical texts which are preserved in Pali, the texts of other early Buddhist schools are recorded in Sanskrit or Prakrit, most of which are extant in Chinese and Tibetan translations. In referring to the term '*dharma*' in those traditions, this work follows its original Sanskrit form, instead of the Pali form '*dhamma*.'

are merely different combinations, classifications, or expositions of them.[244] These elements, said to constitute the five *skandha*s,[245] twelve *āyatana*s,[246] and eighteen *dhātu*s[247] - being elements of matter and mind - are manifested in force.[248] As such, they are temporary, and said to disappear without a residue at death. This kind of scientific way of thinking is, as Stcherbatsky observes, analogous to the Sānkhya philosophy,[249] and perhaps originated in that system.[250]

Stcherbatsky finally concludes that all implications of the connotations of the term *dharma* point to its meaning as 'element of existence.' In other words, the connotations of the term imply that each of these elements of existence constitutes a separate entity, or force, or instance of separate sense-data or mental data.[251] They have no duration; a separate element appears every moment. Hence, they are momentary. They co-operate with one another, under the law of causation. Life is thus merely a phenomenon or 'a series of phenomena.' It goes on as a process of co-operation between these elements, and its destiny is final extinction. The way in which a life unfolds, whether it calmly proceeds towards liberation, or whether it continues rolling on within the cycle of rebirth, depends on the influential mental factors involved, such as ignorance or wisdom. Therefore, these elements could be classed roughly as 1) unrest, 2) cause of unrest, 3) extinction, and 4) cause of extinction. The final

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[244] Stcherbatsky, *The Central Conception of Buddhism*, op. cit., pp. 3-6.

[245] The five *skandha*s (P. *khandha*s) consist of 1) '*rūpa*' form 2) '*vedanā*' feeling or sense-experience 3) '*saṃjñā*' (P. *saññā*) perception or apperception 4) *saṃskāra* (P. *saṅkhāra*) volition or mental formation and 5) *vijñāṇa* (P. *viññāṇa*) discernment or consciousness.

[246] The twelve *āyatana*s (sense-bases or sense-fields) are constituted of six sense-faculties and their corresponding objects. These are eye-form; ear-sound; nose-smell; tongue-taste; body-touch; mind-mental objects.

[247] The eighteen *dhātu*s (elements) comprise the twelve sense bases (*āyatana*s) mentioned above and the corresponding consciousness elements (*vijñāna-dhātu*s, P. *viññāṇa-dhātu*s) that arise from the interaction of the sense-faculties and their objects. For example, the eye-consciousness element arises from 'seeing' - the interaction between 'eye' (*cakṣu*, P. *cakkhu*) and 'form' (*rūpa*). The six consciousness elements are 1) '*cakṣu-vijñāna-dhātu*' eye-consciousness element 2) '*sota-vijñāna-dhātu*' ear-consciousness element 3) '*ghāna-vijñāna-dhātu*' nose-consciousness element 4) '*jivhā-vijñāna-dhātu*' tongue-consciousness element 5) '*kāya-vijñāna-dhātu*' body-consciousness element and 6) '*mano-vijñāna-dhātu*' mental-consciousness element.

[248] Ibid., p. 20.

[249] Ibid., p. 12, note 5.

[250] Ibid., p. 22.

[251] Ibid., pp. 73-75.

goal of life is to stop all co-operations between these elements in order to attain the 'changeless nature.'[252] Stcherbatsky indicates such a conception - a plurality of separate elements without real unity - as 'a system of Radical Pluralism.' While declaring this to be a distinctive Buddhist usage, he also claims that it is inherited from *Upaniṣadic* ancestry.[253]

In Stcherbatsky's understanding of the *Abhidharmakośa*, only these atom-like, irreducible elements are considered '*dharma*.' A compound composed of them must be called '*dharma*s,' not 'a *dharma*.' This is clear from his criticism of the translation of *saṃskṛta-dharma* as 'compound,' that it is a *contradictio in adjecto*. This is because 'A *dharma* is never compound, it is always simple. Wherever there is composition there are several *dharma*s.'[254]

Vasubandhu's position, which Stcherbatsky has adopted in his work, appears consistent even in his later Mahāyāna treatise - the *Vyākhyāyukti*.[255] In the *Vyākhyāyukti*,[256] Vasubandhu lists ten definitions of *dharma*,[257] connecting each of them with the basic meanings of the root *dhṛ* (hold, bear, support) - a method of scholarly explication. Among the ten meanings listed, he claims the first meaning, 'element of existence,' to be the fundamental or general meaning of *dharma*,[258] even though he does not reject other notions of the term. Perhaps such a consistent standpoint can be identified as 'characteristically

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[252] Ibid., p. 74.

[253] Ibid., p. 73.

[254] Ibid., n. 1 p. 40.

[255] *Vyākhyāyukti* (Logic of Explanation), also by Vasubandhu, is an eminent work among *Yogācāra*'s treatises.

[256] Bu-ston and Eugene Obermiller, op. cit., pp. 18-23.

[257] The ten definitions are 1) elements of existence 2) the path 3) *nirvāṇa* 4) non-sensuous element 5) virtue 6) life 7) scripture/the text 8) constant becoming 9) religious vow 10) worldly law.

[258] The same consistency of Vasubandhu's position is observed also in his explication in another Mahāyāna work, the *Karmasiddhiprakaraṇa*. As Anacker states:

> It is obviously by the same masterly hand that composed the *Kośa*: many of the arguments in the two texts are identical. It is a scholastic work, using the technique of expressing the author's views as objections to opponents' theses, and is obviously directed at the same schools, Buddhist and non-Buddhist, to which the *Kośa* was addressed. But it is not a 'Hinayāna' treatise.

Stefan Anacker, "Vasubandhu's *Karmasiddhiprakaraṇa* and the Problem of the Highest Meditations," *Philosophy East and West* 22, no. 3 (1972): 247-258, 247.

Vasubandhu,' as a traditional Buddhist scholar, rather than representing a specifically Hīnayāna or Mahāyāna viewpoint.

While Stcherbatsky holds that the explanation of *dharma* as merely an element of existence represents early Buddhist thought in general, other scholars argue that this exclusive viewpoint on the 'real notion of *dharma*' is relatively new. The notion of *dharma* in earlier Buddhist usage was not that exclusive. It was much wider and more flexible. The term could signify either the single, irreducible elements, compounds composed of them, or the independent and unconditioned *nirvāṇa*.

For example, Bronkhorst, from a more historical viewpoint, outlines the development of the term's meanings from early Buddhism down to the present day.[259] In early Buddhism, he states, *dharma* was understood as items to be memorised, mostly the titles of mental states which are present in the Buddha's teaching. Later, these items came to be collected in the *abhidharma* lists.

After a philosophical revolution that took place in the north-west of India, the result of which was preserved mainly in the Sarvāstivādin texts, *dharma* eventually came to denote the fundamental realities that constitute things or phenomena. The effect of such a revolution was to impose 'a thoroughly atomistic vision' on 'common sense reality.'[260] Thus, the reality perceivable to common sense was seen as ultimately non-existent and unreal, for it could be reduced into elements. From this perspective, Buddhist *dharma* becomes understood in its present significance of the physical and mental states constituting a person. These states are hence known as 'elements of existence' which are understood to be the only real or ultimate realities that exist, while the persons or complexes composed of them are not.

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[259] Bronkhorst, "Some Uses of Dharma in Classical Indian Philosophy," op. cit., 733-734.

[260] With this expression, Bronkhorst refers to that which is perceived as 'reality' by our common sensations. Cox expresses this as "the common place entities that become ready objects of desire and attachment." Collett Cox, "From Category to Ontology: The Changing Role of *Dharma* in Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma," *Journal of Indian philosophy* 32, no. 5-6 (2004): 543-597, 551.

On the whole, Bronkhorst has related the notion of *dharma* as 'teaching' to its later notion as 'element of existence,' as he states:

> …the early Buddhists were not content to memorise his [the Buddha's] own words. They also enumerated the elements contained in his teaching, and this led to the creation of lists of so-called *dharmas*.[261]

Such enumeration could have contributed to the processes of memorisation, learning, or even provided illustration into the composition of the discourse(s), as Gethin argues.[262] In any case, the items listed - the most important ideas and concepts of the teaching - came to be known as *dharma*s - following the initial notion of *dharma* as the 'teaching' which contained them. While the notion of *dharma* as teaching is common to both Buddhists and non-Buddhists, the notion of *dharma* as the items in the lists became peculiarly Buddhist.[263] Following the early Buddhists' attempts to illustrate complete meditational states,[264] psychic characteristics were then listed also. In such a line of development, elements of existence came to be known as *dharma*.

The Sarvāstivāda school later introduced the logical proposition that the *dharma*s are momentary. In the *abhidharma* of this school, these elements of existence were grouped into five categories entitled *pañcavastuka*. According to Bronkhorst, members of the school also introduced some 'newly invented *dharma*' that they thought would fulfil the coherence of the vision of the world. However, this sometimes led to further complex arguments that clouded, rather than clarified, the overall vision.

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[261] Johannes Bronkhorst, "Dharma and Abhidharma," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London* 48, no. 2 (1985): 305-320, 318.

[262] Rupert Gethin, "The Matikas: Memorization, Mindfulness, and the List," in *In the Mirror of Memory. Reflections on Mindfulness and Remembrance in Indian and Tibetan Buddhism*, ed. Janet Gyatso (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992), pp. 223-226.

[263] Bronkhorst, "Dharma and Abhidharma," op. cit., p. 318.

[264] In a dictionary of religion, Ince denies the definition of medition as 'prolonged thought,' saying that such a definition is misused. He then re-defines it as what connotes the Hindu *dhyāna* or the Buddhist *jhāna*, and elaborates it as the cessation of thought. Richard Basil Ince, *A Dictionary of Religion and Religions, Including Theological and Ecclesiastical Terms* (London,: A. Barker, limited, 1935), p. 176. This represents only part of the term's usage in this work. In this study, the word meditation refers to the Pali term *samādhibhāvanā*, the Buddhist practice of concentration and insight.

This particular view regarding the Buddhist *dharma*s (as elements of existence), states Bronkhorst, gives way to an even greater philosophical development in some schools of Mahāyāna Buddhism. The Madhyamaka, for example, refuses even the existence of the *dharma*s. The elements of existence are claimed also to be not ultimately existent. It could then be understood that the denial of all existence, as found in later Buddhism, develops from the initial denial of empirical realities. This even results in the denial of the existence of Buddha(s), as found in literature such as the *Prajñāpāramitā*.[265]

Cox, also in a historical context connected to Sarvāstivāda *dharma* but from a different perspective, elaborates the notions of Buddhist *dharma* relating to concepts such as *bhāva*, *svabhāva*, *dravya*, *prajñapti*, *svalakṣaṇa*, and *sāmānyalakṣaṇa*.[266] She discusses also inter-traditional relations and the inter-relatedness among the Buddhist concepts or *dharma*s themselves. While a number of previous scholars have suggested a dynamic, rather than static, sense of *dharma*s,[267] as well as stressing their essential inter-relatedness;[268] Cox goes further to clarify also the aims and functions of its notions and their categorisations. While Stcherbatsky considers the classification of *dharma*s into five *skandha*s to be useless and considers that this practice is retained only to comply with 'an old habit of thought' in the *Upaniṣad*s,[269] Cox explains the different ways of categorisation as based on 'different interpretive perspectives.'[270]

According to Cox, categorisation is a means to analyse *dharma*s and its purpose is soteriological. She identifies the two processes involved in the analysis of *dharma* (*dharma-pravicaya*) as evaluation and description,

[265] Bronkhorst, "Some Uses of Dharma in Classical Indian Philosophy," op. cit., p. 734.

[266] Cox, "From Category to Ontology," op. cit.

[267] For example, see A.K. Warder, "Dharma and Data," *Journal of Indian philosophy* 1 (1971): 272-295, 275-276; R. M. L. Gethin, *The Buddhist Path to Awakening: A Study of the Bodhi-Pakkhiya Dhamma*, Brill's Indological Library, V. 7. (Leiden; New York: E.J. Brill, 1992), pp. 147-154.

[268] This is reviewed in Cox, op. cit., pp. 545-546.

[269] Stcherbatsky, op. cit., p.73. See also pp. 65-73.

[270] Cox, "From Category to Ontology," op. cit., p. 551.

focussing on their soteriological significance. The evaluative analysis of *dharma*s 'isolates events significant to practice and clearly distinguishes those virtuous events that are to be cultivated from the unvirtuous that are to be abandoned.'[271] Thus, to analyse *dharma*s is to contribute to practice that leads towards the final goal, through purification and liberation. In other words, evaluative analysis of *dharma*s serves as a guide to the practice of self-purification and liberation. In contrast, the function of description is to reveal the 'true implicit structure' of *dharma*s and thus to undermine 'the commonplace entities that become ready objects of desire and attachment.' It thus appears that description of *dharma*s must co-operate with evaluation in order to bring the practitioner to the final goal.

Perhaps because of this dual purpose of analysis of *dharma*(s), there arise different lists of categories from which the later concepts of *dharma* evolve. According to Cox, the fivefold taxonomy (*pañcavastuka*) was developed within the Sarvāstivāda school as a comprehensive system combining both evaluation and description in itself. Its arrangement is, however, not soteriologically hierarchical. She thus concludes:

> The previous taxonomic systems begin from specific circumstances of praxis, perception, and so forth, and present detailed descriptions of the significant activities or events (*dharma*) that interact co-operatively in those particular circumstances. The fivefold taxonomy, by contrast, takes the perspective of the *dharmas* themselves and sets out a delimited number of abstract genera that are intended to encompass every experienced event or phenomenon, or in other words every possible individual instance of a *dharma*.[272]

While traditional differentiation of the mind and matter is still observed in parts of the Sarvāstivādin new fivefold taxonomy, it also appears that new principles of arrangement are introduced, probably as a consequence of doctrinal elaboration and resulting debates from the *abhidharma* period. The new categories also suggest further interpretation of the term *dharma*.[273]

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[271] Ibid.

[272] Ibid., p. 553.

[273] Ibid.

Other than the Sarvāstivādin *dharma*, Conze proposes seven meanings that he considers 'philosophically important' with regard to Buddhist *dharma* in general.[274] He shares Stcherbatsky's opinion that philosophical analysis as present in the Sarvāstivādin 'dharma-theory' was present in all early Buddhist schools rather than being a later development. The seven meanings listed are as follows:

1. transcendental reality - *nirvāṇa* which is the object of supreme knowledge and the *dharma-saraṇa* in which the Buddhists take refuge[275]
2. the law of the universe - the established order or the fixed sequence of *dharma*(s) that is 'immanent, eternal, uncreated'[276]
3. a truly real event - the fact or ontological law according to the *dharma*-theory
4. any objective data, mental objects or percept, whether ultimately true or not
5. characteristic, quality, property, attribute
6. moral law, righteousness, virtue, right behaviour, duty, and religious practice
7. doctrine, scripture, (cognitive) truth, sacred text

The first five meanings are identified as meanings in an ontological sense. The sixth is used in a moral sense.

Comparing the classifications and meanings offered by both Pali *dhamma* and Sanskrit *dharma*, we see a general picture of the notions of early Buddhist *dhamma*. Its wide range of use is observed in both Pali and early Sanskrit. The

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[274] Conze, *Buddhist Thought in India*, op. cit., pp. 92-94.

[275] Ibid., p. 92.

[276] Conze does not specify what is meant here. Nevertheless, his mention of 'the fixed sequence of *dharma'* (P. *dhammaniyāmatā*) and 'the established order of *dharma*' (P. *dhammaṭṭhitatā*) suggests the identification of *dhamma* with 'the rule of causation' or 'dependent origination' (P. *paṭicca-samuppāda*). For this is how the Pali *dhammaniyāmatā* and *dhammaṭṭhitattā* are defined.

difference lies mostly in the later development, which is more advanced and systematised in the Sarvāstivāda tradition, when the Sanskrit *dharma* comes to be used in the exclusive sense of 'element of existence,' as Stcherbatsky claims. Thus, our present study takes the various meanings of the term to be representative of its early Buddhist usage.[277]

In the following section, our work explores in detail the use of *dhamma* in different categories of contexts. In doing so, a categorisation of the term's meaning is employed, based on Gethin's proposed classification with small adjustments.

Preferred Classifications of Meanings of *Dhamma*

While this work accepts that there tends to be general agreement among scholars regarding the meanings of the Buddhist term *dhamma*, individual studies still apply different classifications according to their different purposes.

In the present context, a classification of possible meanings and functions of early Buddhist *dhamma* is employed, in the hope of developing a deeper understanding of the compound *dhammakāya* as a whole. However, as previous scholars have noted, it is not always easy to place *dhamma* in each occurrence into one specific category only. Despite the elaborate system of categorisation provided by the Pali commentators, as listed by Carter,[278] it is still possible that one meaning of *dhamma* could belong to more than one category.

With the above in mind and for the sake of brevity, this work borrows the five categories into which Gethin classes traditional definitions offered in the Pali commentaries.[279] However, small adjustments are made to the description of

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[277] In addition to this, it is observed that the main discussion of early Buddhist *dhamma*, either in the Pali or Sanskrit usage, is related to its sense of 'teaching' or 'doctrine.' However, when writing about *dhamma* as 'teaching,' individual authors have focused on different points. As this issue is important to the interpretation of the compound *dhammakāya*, this work will discuss it further below.

[278] See Carter, *Dhamma*, op. cit., pp. 157-159.

[279] Gethin, "He Who Sees Dhamma Sees Dhammas," op. cit., Table 2, p. 526.

each category, in order to suit the context of the present study. The five categories are as follows:

1) *dhamma* signifying a mental or physical state; an element of existence
2) *dhamma* signifying nature or tendency
3) *dhamma* used in the sense of conduct
4) *dhamma* signifying reality
5) *dhamma* as teaching

There follows a brief account regarding the content of the five categories.

1. *Dhamma* Signifying a Physical or Mental State

Dhamma understood as a physical or mental state or quality, covers also the meaning of a mentally perceivable element or activity. This is probably similar to Stcherbatsky's definition of *dhamma* as an 'element of existence.' As mentioned earlier, Stcherbatsky believes this to be the only real meaning of *dhamma*.[280] Bu-ston similarly claims it to be fundamental meaning of the term.[281] Warder, however, disagrees with the word 'element,' as it provides a sense of substance and stasis. He argues that a *dhamma* is 'non-substance.' It 'has no duration,' and 'is unrest.' Indeed, Warder prefers the translation 'maintaining' for *dhamma* in any instance.[282] Cox shares the same opinion that the word 'element' carries merely the static sense. She calls *dhamma*s 'activities' or 'events,' for such a definition carries a dynamic sense of the Buddhist dogma regarding impermanence.[283] Conze, defines it in a more abstract sense, as 'attribute, quality, property, or characteristic.'[284] While Cox's definition seems to subsume *dhamma* in the sense of imaginary mental objects, Conze separates this sense of *dhamma* in a particular category.[285] Gethin adds

[280] Stcherbatsky, *The Central Conception of Buddhism*, op. cit., pp. 5-6, 73-75.

[281] Bu-ston, op. cit., p. 18.

[282] Warder, "Dharmas and Data," op. cit.

[283] Cox, op. cit., p. 553.

[284] Conze, *Buddhist Thought in India*, op. cit., p. 93.

[285] Ibid., p. 79 item 4. Cf. Ibid., p. 87.

that *dhamma* in this context is usually found in its plural form (*dhammā*), which he describes as the mental and physical primary qualities that constitute the entirety of experience or reality.[286] He claims that this notion represents the prevalent usage of the word *dhamma* in the Pali *Nikāyas*.[287] Thus, in a certain sense, this notion of *dhamma* can be understood as the basic principle underlying everything, either living or non-living.

Examples of *dhamma* in this sense are perhaps the twelve conditioned *dhamma*s belonging to the chain of *paṭicca-samuppāda,* the process of 'dependent origination.' Various *dhamma*s listed in many different categories, such as those found in the *Saṅgīti-sutta*[288] or *Dasuttara-sutta*[289] of the *Dīgha-nikāya*, and *dhamma*s enumerated in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya*, possess also this connotation.

Generally, when the term *dhamma* signifies a physical or mental state, it is used in a neutral sense. That is, the term itself does not carry any particular connotation. It is similar to the English word 'state' which conveys a merely neutral meaning. However, different connotations can be added to it either by the inclusion of a qualitative or when the term *dhamma* refers to another term that provides it with a particular connotation. The former case may be seen in expressions such as '*kusala dhamma*' (a wholesome state or quality), '*pāpadhamma*' (an evil state or quality), '*uttarimanussadhamma*' (a quality of further men; a quality of higher men),[290] '*samaṇadhamma*' (the quality or practice of Buddhist renunciants), '*bodhipakkhika dhamma*' (the quality that pertains to enlightenment), '*sārāṇiya dhamma*' (a quality that calls for

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[286] Gethin, "He Who Sees Dhamma Sees Dhammas," op. cit., p. 521.

[287] Ibid.

[288] D.III.207-271.

[289] D.III.272-292.

[290] This is synonymous with *alamariyañāṇadassanavisesa*, the supernatural quality of knowledge and vision of the noble ones.

remembrance),[291] or '*lobhadhamma*' (an attribute that is greed).[292] The latter may be seen in the following example:

> Dvīhi bhikkhave *dhammehi samannāgato* yathābhataṃ nikkhitto evaṃ niraye. Katamehi dvīhi? Kodhena ca upanāhena ca . . . .
>
> A.I.96
>
> Monks, a person who is *endowed with two dhamma*s would be thrown in the hell as if carried there. What are the two? Anger and ill-will….

In this instance, the term '*dhamma*s' in the first sentence of the passage, refers to anger (*kodha*) and ill-will (*upanāha*) that appear in the following sentence. Thus, even though the original connotation of the term is neutral, the term *dhamma*s in this particular passage signifies these two immoral attributes.

Comparing this with the list of Pali and Sinhalese traditional definitions of *dhamma*, as listed earlier, we find that the use of *dhamma* in this sense covers all the meanings given in the Pali and Sinhalese commentaries. With such a broad range of signification, *dhamma* belonging to this category usually carries also other connotations. This category of meaning of the term often overlaps with other categories, such as mental behaviour. For whenever the term refers to mental conduct, it possesses also the sense of a 'mental quality' or 'mental element.'

2. *Dhamma* Signifying Nature or Tendency

In the first category, it was noted that the notion of *dhamma* as a physical or mental state or quality refers to basic elements or states, which possess certain properties, and which characterise things or phenomena. In this category, the notion of *dhamma* as nature or tendency signifies the characteristics or properties of those things or phenomena in their entirety.

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[291] This means that the person who is endowed with these qualities will be worthy of recognition among his fellows.

[292] Herein, the qualitatives in the first two examples denote wholesome and unwholesome states in general without specifying what those states are, while the other five represent the term *dhamma* qualified with an adjective which denotes a specific connotation.

Regarding the notion of *dhamma* in this second category, scholars provide various descriptions. For example, Oldenberg defines it merely as ‘nature.’[293] Horner identifies it as the primary meaning of *dhamma*. She argues that it is the ‘natural state or condition of beings and things, the law of their being, what it is right for them to be, the very stuff of their being, *evaṃ-dhammo*.’[294] Thus, this sense of *dhamma* is something like a normal course, normal recurrence, or inclination.

As Gethin notes, the term *dhamma,* used in the sense of nature or tendency, is generally found as the last component of a *babubbihi* (Skt: *bahuvrīhi*) compound. In this pattern of composition, the term provides the meaning of ‘tendency, nature, character, or quality.’[295]

Following are examples of *dhamma* carrying such a connotation:

> *evaṃdhamma* = of such nature; whose nature is as such
>
> *jarādhamma* = having aging as nature; whose nature is to be aged
>
> *chaḍḍanīyadhamma* = whose nature is to be abandoned
>
> *anuppādadhamma* = whose nature is not to arise (again)

These are all particular uses which relate to the translation of the term as ‘nature’ or ‘natural condition.’

For other connotations regarding properties or characteristics, however, the term could carry such notions even though it is not incorporated as the last component of a *bahubbīhi* compound. This was demonstrated already in the first category, which regarded the notion of *dhamma* as representing physical or mental elements.

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[293] Oldenberg, *Buddha, Sein Leben, Seine Lehre, Seine Gemeinde*, op. cit., p. 256.

[294] Horner, “Early Buddhist Dhamma,” op. cit., p. 115.

[295] Gethin, “He Who Sees Dhamma Sees Dhammas,” op. cit., pp. 518, 522.

3. *Dhamma* Used in the Sense of Conduct or Behaviour

Despite the claim that the meaning of *dhamma* as an element of existence underlies all usage of the Buddhist term *dhamma*, in some instances, the message delivered by the term *dhamma* will be made clearer by simply ascribing other connotations, such as that found in this category.

Here, *dhamma* includes three means of performance: physical, verbal, and mental. Regarding its quality, this sense of the term can be further analysed into three types: 1) neutral, 2) positive, and 3) negative.

1) *Dhamma* used in the neutral sense of conduct

The use of *dhamma* in the neutral sense of action equals the term *kamma*, meaning 'action' or 'deed' in that the term itself does not carry any positive or negative connotations. But such connotations can be added to the term through the addition of other words referring to such characteristics, such as *vasaladhamma* 'action of an outcast,' *gāmadhamma* 'action of a householder.' In these instances, the term *dhamma* itself is used in a neutral sense, but the qualitative adds a specific context to it.

2) *Dhamma* used in the sense of positive conduct

Frequently, *dhamma* is used alone in the sense of positive behaviour. Whenever it appears along with its opposite '*adhamma*,' the term *dhamma* always has a positive connotation. Its positive meaning as a 'wholesome deed or practice' is usually connected with other terms derived from the root *car* 'practice.' A frequently found pattern is '*dhammaṃ carati*' meaning '(He) practises good conduct.' Such usage of *dhamma* is found in the *Majjhima-nikāya*:

> … mahārājā *dhammaṃ carati* brāhmaṇagahapatikesu negamesu c'eva jānapadesu ca….
>
> M.II.74
>
> … the great king *behaves appropriately* to brahmins, householders, villagers, as well as country-folk ....

In this instance, the term *dhamma* is used as an adverb, meaning 'appropriately.'

With regard to verbal action, the term is connected with other words derived from the root *vad*, meaning 'speak,' as in the following example:

> rāgaṃ ca dosaṃ ca pahāya mohaṃ *dhammaṃ vadantā* va bhavanti santo.
> S.I.184
> Having abandoned lust, anger, and delusion, they are virtuous men *talking dhamma*.

This sense of *dhamma* is found also in the negative form '*adhamma*' with the opposite meaning of 'no good' or 'bad.' For example:

> manussesu yo hoti seṭṭhasammato. So ce adhammaṃ carati pageva itarā pajā
> A.II.75
> He who is regarded as the highest among people. If he practises evil (deeds), what else could be said with regard to other people?

In this instance, the term *dhamma* alone possesses a positive meaning. The negative sense is added by the prefix 'a-.'[296] Therefore, in the above example, the last sentence could be literally translated as 'If he practises a not-good (deed)….'

Such a meaning of *dhamma*, signifying positive action or speech, could be found also in the instrumental form *dhammena*. Here, it is to be used adverbially, and translated as 'rightly, 'appropriately,' or 'well.' The same holds true for its negative form *adhammena* which can be translated as 'wrongly,' 'inappropriately,' or 'badly.'

The term *dhamma* in this sense is found mostly in a compound, where it is connected with another component derived from the root *car* 'practise' or *vad* 'speak.' Examples of such compounds are as follows:

dhammacārī = who normally practises good conduct

[296] According to Pali grammatical rules, this negative sense has its root in a particular word '*na*.' This word retains its normal form when its function is that of negating a verb. But when it negates an adjective or a noun, it forms a prefix to the substantive in order to provide a sense of negation. In such cases, the word '*na*' alters itself to the prefix 'a-' or 'an-,' according to the first letter of the following substantive. In the case of '*adhamma*,' the term '*dhamma*' alone carries the positive sense of conduct. The prefix 'a-' negates the original sense of the term, thus altering the meaning of the whole new word to 'not-*dhamma*,' 'not-good,' 'not-appropriate,' or 'not-right.'

dhammavādī = who normally speaks good, virtuous speeches

dhammadiṭṭhi = (who has) correct view

dhammacariyā = good practice, right conduct

dhammarājā = a king who is endowed with morality, who reigns with good conduct

anudhamma- = following the righteous way

This connotation of *dhamma* covers the definitions *guṇa* (moral quality), *sucarita* (good conduct), and *ñāya* (proper manner), provided in the Pali traditional accounts. It is equal also to *ācāra* (proper conduct), which is formed in opposition to *anācāra* (improper conduct).

3) *Dhamma* used in a negative sense in regard to conduct

The use of *dhamma* in relation to unwholesome action or deed is found less frequently. The term more commonly takes on this connotation when it refers to an offence, when it is used in relation to the monastic rules. Offence means any violation committed against the discipline. Once committed, different levels of penalty are incurred, depending on how strong the offence is.[297] *Dhamma* used in this sense thus appears mostly in the *Vinaya-piṭaka* of the Pali canon. It can be found also in the *Sutta-piṭaka*, but rarely.

The usage of *dhamma* in the sense of an offence is easily recognised, for it usually follows the specific title of an offence, as in the following examples.

1) asuddho hoti puggalo aññataraṃ *pārājikaṃ dhammaṃ* ajjhāpanno
Vin.III.166

[297] The offence considered strongest is entitled *Pārājika*, meaning 'that which involves expulsion.' Once committed, the monk is to be expelled from the order and will not be accepted to the order again. Four kinds of conduct are considered the gravest offences: 1) killing a human being 2) stealing anothers' property 3) sexual intercourse 4) assertion of one's own non-existing supranatural quality. For a monk who really possesses such quality, such a declaration is not considered the gravest of offences.

The second strongest offence requires many steps of formal expiation, including an official expiation ceremony in the midst of the Sangha as the last step. Expiation by personal confession with a promise of future restraint, witnessed by a fellow monk, is required for other offences.

Unclean is a person who has committed a *gravest offence*.[298]

2) āpanno vā *saṅghādisesaṃ dhammaṃ* yathādhammaṃ paṭikarissati

A.II.242

The *bhikkhu* who has committed the *second heaviest offence* will expiate lawfully.[299]

In some cases, the term does not follow the specific title of an offence, but the title that the term *dhamma* refers to appears somewhere in the same passage.

dvinnaṃ dhammānaṃ aññatarena vadeyya *saṅghādisesena vā pācittiyena vā….*

Vin.III.191

(if a trustworthy person) would accuse (the *bhikkhu*) with any of the two offences (*dhamma*s), namely, the offence requiring the *Saṅgha* (*saṅghādisesa*) or that requiring expiation (*pācittiya*) ….[300]

Besides overlapping with the first category of meaning regarding a physical or mental state, the usage of *dhamma* in this category - as conduct or behaviour - could also overlap with other categories, such as teaching. When the term denotes a teaching prescribed under the Buddha's authority, it calls for practice of physical, verbal, or mental action. Thus, a title such as '*sekhiya dhamma,*' 'courtesy to be learned' signifies teaching, on the one hand, and a physical behaviour on the other hand.

4. *Dhamma* Signifying Reality

Sometimes, the term *dhamma* refers to the reality that the Buddha has realised in his enlightenment. It is the reality from which his teaching originates.[301]

There is general consensus with regard to what the Buddha realised and taught; that the heart of Buddhist teaching is the 'four noble truths' (*catu ariya-*

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[298] Etymologically, perhaps *pārājika* means 'that which involves expulsion,' as Burnouf suggests. See Childers, op. cit., p. 333b. The Indian commentators, however, refer the word to *parājita*, meaning 'the person who is defeated;' for the monk who commits this offence must be expelled from the priesthood. No expiation is permitted. Frequently, this offence is equated with 'death from the monkhood,' as the re-ordination of the person is not allowed under any circumstances.

[299] Literally, *Saṇghādisesa* means 'requiring *Saṅgha* at every stage,' for a monk who commits such an offence is required to expiate in a formal ceremony within the *Saṅgha*.

[300] The distinction between *Saṅghādisesa* and *Pācittiya* offences is that the former requires the *Saṅgha* at every stage of expiation, while the expiation for the latter could be done in the presence of only one other monk Also the former requires a formal ceremony, while the latter could be done privately.

[301] The Buddha's teaching that directs his disciples to the realisation of such an experience will be classed in another category, i.e., '*dhamma* as teaching.' This will be discussed in the next section.

sacca).[302] Some prefer to emphasise the 'noble eightfold path' (*ariya aṭṭhaṅgika-magga*) or 'dependent origination' (*paṭicca-samuppāda*) instead.[303] Others may prefer to emphasise that the Buddha has realised and taught *nibbāna*. This divergence of emphasis in regard to what the Buddha has realised may be attributable to the different explanations found in particular Pali passages. However, different explanations do not always represent disagreement, for different names can be ascribed to the same realities, when viewed in their different aspects. In this regard, an inquiry into different Pali passages explaining the Buddha's enlightenment may help clarify this point.

In the *Dhammacakkappavattana-sutta*,[304] the Buddha declares[305] that he has realised the four truths during his enlightenment. He first relates to his audience that he has realised 'the middle path' (*majjhimā paṭipadā*) that leads to *nibbāna*. He identifies this 'middle path' with the 'noble eightfold path.'[306] At the same time, the latter is described as the fourth of the four noble truths[307] that he has realised.

Elsewhere,[308] the narrative parts of the canon relate the events that occurred immediately after the Buddha's perfect enlightenment. In the first week, he is said to have sat in a single posture for seven days, experiencing the bliss of release. One night,[309] he reflected upon dependent origination (*paṭicca*

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[302] Gethin, "He Who Sees Dhamma Sees Dhammas," op. cit., p. 522.

[303] Ibid., Horsch, op. cit. In the latter paper, Horsch claims that the Buddhist notion of *dhamma* is equivalent to *paṭicca-samuppāda* 'dependent origination.' He sketches out a certain line of development of the term *dharma* in Indian usage and claims a direct development of the Buddhist notion of *dharma* as dependent origination from the Vedic use of the world law.

[304] S.V.420-424.

[305] This work agrees that the *arrangement* of the *sutta* contents could have been created to serve a mnemonic function during the period of the propagation of Buddhist teachings through the oral tradition (*mukhapāṭha*). However, the *contents* themselves should have been taken from the Buddha's own declarations.

[306] The 'noble eightfold path' (*ariya-aṭṭhaṅgika-maggga*) is constituted of 1) right view (*sammādiṭṭhi*), 2) right thought (*sammāsaṅkappa*), 3) right speech (*sammāvācā*), 4) right action (*sammākammanta*), 5) right livelihood (*sammā-ājīva*), 6) right effort (*sammāvāyāma*), 7) right mindfulness (*sammāsati*), and 8) right concentration (*sammāsamādhi*).

[307] The 'four noble truths' (*catu ariya-sacca*) refer to the truths that the Buddha and his noble disciples have realised in their enlightenment. These are 1) '*dukkha*' the pain or displeasure one necessarily encounters while in the cycle of rebirth 2) '*dukkha-samudaya*' the causes of *dukkha* 3) '*dukkhanirodha*' the cessation of *dukkha* and 4) '*dukkhanirodhagāminī paṭipadā*' the path or practice that leads to the cessation of *dukkha*.

[308] Vin.I.1-3, Ud.1-3.

[309] Presumably this occurs in the last night of the week. It is not stated clearly in the Pali passage which night is meant here, but this event is noted after the mention of his seven-day long meditation.

samuppāda)[310] both in forward and reverse orders, regarding the ways in which the conditioned *dhamma*s originate and how they become extinct.

At the end of each watch of the night, after his contemplation, the Buddha utters a solemn speech. The context of the words uttered in the three watches is almost the same, with a small difference. Even though the passage does not distinguish the content of dependent origination pondered in the three watches, the difference between the three utterances suggests an increasing depth of contemplation as time passed.

In the first watch, the utterance is recorded as follows:

> yadā have pātubhavanti dhammā   ātāpino jhāyato brāhmaṇassa
> ath'assa kaṅkhā vapayanti sabbā   yato pajānāti sahetudhammaṃ.
>
> Ud.1
>
> Whenever *dhamma*s become manifest to the ardent meditating brahmin,
> Then his doubts all vanish, for he comprehends the *dhamma*-with-cause.

In this verse, the term *dhamma* appears twice: first in the plural form of the simple term, and later as a constituent of a singular compound *sahetudhamma*. According to the context, its first appearance represents the items realised in the Buddha's meditation. Its second appearance affirms this point and provides

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[310] According to the canon, all *dhamma*s in the 'cycle of rebirth' (*saṃsāra*) arise according to their corresponding conditions. Having arisen, they contribute further to the rise of other conditioned *dhamma*s. Without the corresponding conditions, these *dhamma*s do not arise. The successive rise of the conditioned *dhamma*s form a chain of causation entitled 'dependent origination.' This is usually described in the following manner:

1. *avijjāpaccayā saṅkhārā* — Having ignorance as condition, volitional formations arise.
2. *saṅkhārapaccayā viññāṇaṃ* — Having volitional formation as condition, consciousness arises.
3. *viññāṇapaccayā nāmarūpaṃ* — Having consciousness as condition, name and form arise.
4. *nāmarūpapaccayā saḷāyatanaṃ* — Having name and form as condition, six sense-faculties arise.
5. *saḷāyatanapaccayā phasso* — Having six sense-faculties as condition, contact arises.
6. *phassapaccayā vedanā* — Having contact as condition, sense-experience arises.
7. *vedanāpaccayā taṇhā* — Having sense-experience as condition, craving arises.
8. *taṇhāpaccayā upādānaṃ* — Having craving as condition, attachment arises.
9. *upādānapaccayā bhavo* — Having attachment as condition, existence arises.
10. *bhavapaccayā jāti* — Having existence as condition, birth arises.
11. *jātipaccayā jarāmaraṇaṃ-soka-parideva-dukkha-domanass-upāyāsā sambhavanti* — Having birth as condition, aging and death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, displeasure, and desperation arise.

In the reverse order, it is said that these elements become extinct when the corresponding conditions cease without remains. That is their cessation.

From the details listed above, it can be said that the dependent origination (*paṭicca samuppāda*) represents the first and second truths, '*dukkha*' and 'its causes.'

the additional information that the term *dhamma* mentioned here refers to the 'conditioned *dhamma*s' that would arise according to corresponding condition.[311] Here, the term *dhamma* together with a *bahubbīhi* compound '*sahetu*,'[312] constitute a *kammadhāraya* compound *sahetudhamma.*[313] The *bahubbīhi* compound *sahetu*, translated as 'with cause,' performs the adjectival function of qualifying the term *dhamma*. Hence, the whole *kammadhāraya* compound '*sahetudhamma*' is translated as '*dhamma*-with-cause,' as opposed to '*dhamma* without cause.' Thus, it denotes a category of *dhamma* for which origination is dependent on a cause (or causes). Such a meaning of *sahetudhamma* suggests that each item the Buddha reviewed and realised during the first watch of the night was 'conditioned.' The mention of *dhamma*-with-cause implies that the Buddha realised the *dhamma* which is a result, along with its cause(s). Thus their relationship as 'dependent causation' was realised.

In the second watch, as recorded, the Buddha uttered a similar verse with a small difference in the last line:

> yadā have pātubhavanti dhammā ātāpino jhāyato brāhmaṇassa
> ath'assa kaṅkhā vapayanti sabbā yato khayaṃ paccayānaṃ avedi.
>
> Vin.I.2
>
> Whenever *dhamma*s become manifest to the ardent meditating brahman,
> Then his doubts all vanish, for he has realised the exhaustion of the causes.

The wording suggests that the Buddha's state of realisation in the second watch is a continuation of that in the first watch. It indicates the exhaustion of the causes of those conditioned *dhamma*s which were realised during the first watch. This results in the non-arising of those *dhamma*s, and thus the breaking of the chain of the dependently originated *dhamma*s.[314] This may be compared

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[311] See the details of dependent origination provided above.

[312] A *bahubbīhi* or 'attributive' compound is a form whereby components collectively refer to another substantive. In this case, the attributive compound '*sahetu*' can be grammatically analysed as '*saha hetunā (or hetūhi) vattatīti sahetu*.' It is composed of two constituents: '*saha*, meaning 'with' and '*hetu*,' meaning 'cause.' This form is generally referred to as '*saha-pubbapada-pahubbīhi-samāsa*,' or 'the attributive compound with '*saha*' as the first (former) constituent.

[313] A *kammadhāraya* or 'adjectival' compound is formed by combining a substantive with an adjective. In this case, the term '*dhamma*' is the substantive qualified by a *bahubbīhi* compound '*sahetu*.'

[314] This represents the realisation of the reverse order of 'dependent origination.'

to the Buddha's conquest over Māra and his army, as further expressed in the verse uttered in the third watch:

> yadā have pātubhavanti dhammā ātāpino jhāyato brāhmaṇassa
> vidhūpayaṃ tiṭṭhati mārasenaṃ suriyo'va obhāsayaṃ antalikkhaṃ
>
> Vin.I.2
>
> Whenever *dhammas* become manifest to the ardent meditating brahman,
> Then he stands expelling Mara and his army, just as the sun illuminating the sky.

In this passage, the Buddha's victory is compared to the sun that expels darkness from the sky. It represents, on the one hand, the permanent eradication of all defilements, so that they cannot recur in the future. On the other hand, it implies brightness or 'the absence of darkness,' resulting from such a victory over the defilements.

Regarding the Buddha's realisation of *dhamma*s, expressed in these three verses after a continuous process of reviewing, the term *dhamma* denotes 'elements of existence' that are dependently originated endlessly, as long as their causes remain.

Furthermore, the specific term *sahetudhamma***,** '*dhamma*-with-cause,' implies also the existence of its opposite, '*dhamma* without cause.' This is a general expression for *nibbāna*, the unconditioned. Thus it could be understood that the *dhamma*s which the Buddha realised during his enlightenment were both the 'conditioned' and 'unconditioned' *dhamma*s.

The Buddha's discourse about the profundity of *dhamma*s, as presented in the *Ariyapariyesanā-sutta*, supports this conclusion. It is recorded that he was reluctant to preach after his seventh week of enlightenment because the *dhamma*s he had realised are very hard to comprehend, especially for beings who are still attached to sensual pleasure and desire:

> adhigato kho myāyaṃ dhammo gambhīro duddaso duranubodho santo paṇīto atakkāvacaro nipuṇo paṇḍitavedaniyo. ālayarāmā kho panāyaṃ pajā ālayaratā ālayasammuditā. ālayarāmāya kho pana pajāya ālayaratāya ālayasammuditāya duddasaṃ idaṃ ṭhānaṃ yad idaṃ idappaccayatā paṭiccasamuppādo, idam pi kho ṭhānaṃ sududdasaṃ yad idaṃ sabbasaṃkhārasamatho sabbūpadhipaṭinissaggo taṇhakkhayo virāgo nirodho nibbānaṃ.

Vin.I.4-5, M.I.167-168, S.I.136.

> This *dhamma* attained by me is deep, hard to see, hard to comprehend, subtle, fine, beyond the sphere of reasoning, recondite, apprehensible only to the wise. These people, however, are so delighted in, devoted to, and so attached to desire. For people with such attachment, this is hard to see, namely, the law of causality, the dependent origination. Also the most difficult for them to see is the extinction of all conditioned elements, the abandonment of all substrata of rebirth, the destruction of desire, the absence of passion, the cessation, *nibbāna*.

In this passage, it is clarified that the *dhamma*s the Buddha realised in his enlightenment, are both the 'conditioned,' represented by the law of causality, and the 'unconditioned,' represented by various epithets of *nibbāna*.[315] Here, three out of the four noble truths are mentioned: dependent causation refers to the first two truths, i.e., *dukkha* and its causes, and its cessation refers to the third truth, namely *dukkhanirodha*. It can be said that the fourth truth is implied also in the realisation of the law of causality, especially in its reverse order.

While *nibbāna*, dependent origination, the noble eightfold path, and the four noble truths are directly declared to have been realised in the Buddha's enlightenment**;** some other aspects of reality were implied also in the canon. However, it is a more complicated matter to clarify further the nature of those realities.

Traditional exegeses offer similar ideas regarding such realities. As Carter notes, MA defines *dhamma* in both compounds '*diṭṭhadhamma*' (having seen *dhamma*),[316] and '*viditadhamma*' (having known *dhamma*)[317] merely as *saccāni* 'truths.'[318] But the *Dharmapradīpikā* defines *dhamma* in a similar phrase '*diṭṭhadhamma pattadhamma*' (having seen *dhamma*, having attained *dhamma*) as 'paths, fruits, and *nibbāna.*'[319] This is similar to Bu-ston who classifies the realities as (noble) paths and fruits.

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[315] The synonyms of *nibbāna* provided in the passage indicate that *nibbāna* can be identified with the third truth, 'the cessation of *dukkha*.'

[316] Lit. 'by whom the *dhamma* is seen.'

[317] Lit. 'by whom the *dhamma* is known.'

[318] Carter, *Dhamma*, op. cit., p. 60.

[319] Ibid., p. 137.

Even though these transcendental paths and fruits are not stated directly in the events regarding the Buddha's enlightenment, it is evident that they are steps to be attained during the progression towards perfect enlightenment, as mentioned here and there throughout the Pali canon.

Occasionally the Pali canon ranks the Buddhist noble ones according to their levels of attainment. For example, In the *Dhammakathika-vagga*[320] of the *Saṃyutta-nikāya*, the venerable Sāriputta declares a number of negative aspects of the five aggregates[321] that a Buddhist monk should ponder. If he paid careful attention, it would result in his spiritual progress. Thereafter, the steps involved in such a progression, namely, the attainment of the fruits of higher noble states, are itemised. Having carefully attended to the five aggregates, the following attainments could be anticipated:

1. A virtuous monk (*sīlavanta bhikkhu*) will attain the fruit of the Stream-attaining state (*Sotāpattiphala*).
2. A Stream-attainer (*Sotāpanna*) will attain the fruit of the Once-returning state (*Sakadāgāmiphala*).
3. A once returner (*Sakadāgāmī*) will attain the fruit of the Non-returning state (*anāgāmiphala*).
4. A Non-returner (*anāgāmī*) will attain the fruit of Arhatship (*arahattaphala*).
5. For an Arhat (*arahant*), even though there is no further state to be attained, such a proper observation will lead to pleasant dwelling and mindfulness.

In this list, different levels of the noble fruits are said to be attained in succession from the Stream-attaining state up to the emancipation or Arhatship.

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320 S.III.167-169.

321 The Pali expression '*pañca-upādānakkhandha*' is literally translated as the 'five aggregates subject to attachment.' These *khandha*s should be viewed as impermanent, unpleasing, as a disease, as a tumour, as a dart, as misery, as an affliction, as alien, as disintegrating, as empty, as not-self.

Elsewhere, eight, instead of four, levels of Buddhist noble disciples are listed:

1. an emancipated one or an Arhat (*arahant*)[322]
2. a noble one who is faring along towards penetration of the fruit of Arhatship (*arahattaphalasacchikiriyāya paṭipanna*)
3. a Non-returner (*anāgāmī*)
4. a noble one who is faring along towards penetration of the fruit of Non-returning (*anāgāmiphalasacchikiriyāya paṭipanna*)
5. a Once-returner (*sakadāgāmī*)
6. a noble one who is faring along towards penetration of the fruit of Once-returning (*sakadāgāmiphalasacchikiriyāya paṭipanna*)
7. a Stream-attainer (*sotāpanna*)
8. a noble one who is faring along towards penetration of the fruit of Stream-attaining (*sotāpattiphalasacchikiriyāya paṭipanna*)

Individuals who have attained these states are sometimes called 'eight great living beings' (*mahanta bhūta*) within this discipline.[323] They are said to be worthy of adoration, hospitality, offering, and veneration, for they are entitled an incomparable field of merit.[324] These eight noble persons are mentioned frequently in a particular expression 'four pairs or eight individuals,'[325] found in the description of the assembly of noble disciples (*ariya-saṅgha*).

In the *Indriya-saṃyutta*, [326] where the equality (*samatta*) and fullness (*paripūratta*) of the five controlling faculties (*pañc-indriya*)[327] are graded

[322] This signifies an individual who has attained the Buddhist *summum bonum*.

[323] A.IV.204.

[324] D.III.255, A.IV.292, A.IV.373.

[325] Pali: '*cattāri purisayugāni aṭṭha purisapuggalā*'

[326] S.V.202.

[327] The five controlling faculties (*pañca-indriya*) refer to confidence (*saddhā*), energy (*viriya*), mindfulness (*sati*), concentration (*samādhi*), and wisdom (*paññā*). These five qualities of an *arahant* are both well balanced and perfect. Other noble disciples possess them in lesser degrees of equality and completeness.

according to individuals, the above eight noble persons are said to possess these five elements in respectively lesser degrees of their equality and fullness.

The same ranking is found elsewhere, wherever the actual qualities of these Buddhist nobles are to be graded. For example, in the *Dakkhiṇāvibhaṅga-sutta*,[328] the Buddha declares different degrees of merit that can be anticipated as a result of offering gifts (*dāna*) to different individuals. According to the *sutta*, it may be expected that making an offering to an animal (*tiracchānagata*) would yield a hundredfold.[329] Respectively higher degrees of merit can be anticipated as a result of giving to the following individuals:

1. an unvirtuous worldling (*puthujjanadussīla*)
2. a virtuous worldling (*puthujjanasīlavant*)
3. an outsider who is detached from sensual pleasures (*bāhiraka kāmesu vītarāga*)[330]
4. one faring along for the penetration of the fruit of the Stream-attaining (*sotāpattiphalasacchikiriyāya paṭipanna*)
5. a Stream-attainer (*sotāpanna*)
6. one faring along for the penetration of the fruit of the Once-returning (*sakadāgāmiphalasacchikiriyāya paṭipanna*)
7. a Once-returner (*sakadāgāmī*)
8. one faring along for the penetration of the fruit of the Non-returning (*anāgāmiphalasacchikiriyāya paṭipanna*)
9. a Non-returner (*anāgāmī*)

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[328] M.III.255.

[329] Traditionally, this is understood as the yielding of results for a hundred lifetimes. But the strength of the retribution depends on many factors such as the virtuous qualities (*guṇa*) of both the donator (*dāyaka*) and the receiver (*paṭigāhaka*), the pure intention of giving (*cetanā*), and so on.

[330] This refers to a non-Buddhist *jhāyin*.

10. one faring along for the penetration of the fruit of Arhatship (*arahattaphalasacchikiriyāya paṭipanna*)
11. an Arhat (*arahant*)
12. one enlightened for and by himself alone (*Paccekabuddha*)
13. a *Tathāgata*, the enlightened, the fully self-awakened Arhat (*Tathāgata arahanta sammāsambuddha*)

Linguistically, the title '*phalasacckhikiriyāya paṭipanno*' or 'one faring along for the penetration of the fruit' could be interpreted as '*any* individual who is attempting to win the particular noble fruits.' Philosophically, however, the ranking of his qualities in the above order limits such an interpretation. Instead, it indicates his state of being one of the Buddhist nobles (*ariya puggala*).

For instance, 'one who is faring along towards penetration of the fruit of Arhatship' (*arahattaphalasacchikiriyāya paṭipanna*) is ranked as a greater field of merit than a Non-returner (*anāgāmī*). Also in the previous list, he is said to possess a fuller degree of the five controlling faculties (*pañcindriya*) than that possessed by a Non-returner. This indicates that such an individual has already attained the fruit of Non-returning state (*anāgāmiphala*), and is proceeding a step further towards Arhatship (*arahatta*). The same applies for the title 'one faring along for the penetration of the fruit of the Non-returning' (*anāgāmiphalasacchikiriyāya paṭipanna*) which signifies an individual who has already attained the state of Once-returner (*sakadāgāmī*), and is proceeding a step further towards the Non-returning state (*anāgāmi*). Likewise, he is said to possess a fuller degree of the five controlling faculties (*pañcindriya*) than that possessed by a Once-returner (*sakadāgāmī*).[331] Therefore, the word '*paṭipanna*' (farer) in the above list indicates not only the person's 'attempt' or 'intention' to proceed to a higher state, but also the 'accomplishment' of a *pre-requisite state*, i.e., the acquisition of qualities of a 'higher level than the fruit

[331] S.V.202.

of the previous state.' In the old strata of the Pali canon, an individual who has achieved such a 'prerequisite state' of a noble fruit is entitled 'one who is faring along the penetration of the fruit' (*phala-sacchikiriyāya paṭipanna*) of that level. Such 'prerequisite states' of the four fruits are named in the *Niddesa*, *Paṭisambhidāmagga* and the *Abhidhamma-piṭaka* as 'four transcendental/supramundane paths' (*lokuttara magga*s) from the 'path to Stream-entering' (*sotāpatti-magga*) up to the 'path to Arhatship' (*arahatta-magga*).[332] These four paths together with the four noble fruits constitute eight successive noble states, listed and elaborated in detail in the later strata of the Pali canon,[333] as follows:

1) the path of Stream-attaining (*sotāpattimagga*)
2) the fruit of Stream-attaining (*sotāpattiphala*)
3) the path of Once-returning (*sakadāgāmimagga*)
4) the fruit of Once-returning (*sakadāgāmiphala*)
5) the path of Non-returning (*anāgāmimagga*)
6) the fruit of Non-returning (*anāgāmiphala*)
7) the path of Arthatship (*arahattamagga*)[334]
8) the fruit of Arhatship (*arahattaphala*)

Among these, a person who has achieved steps 2, 4, 6, or 8 (the four fruits) is called a Stream-attainer (*sotāpanna*), a Once-returner (*sakadāgāmī*), a Non-

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332 For example, see Nd1.114, Nd1.202, Ps.I.25-26, Ps.I.33, Ps.I.47, Ps.I.69-70, Ps.II.13, Ps.II.31.

333 For example, see Ps.I.68, Ps.I.75, Ps.I.82, Ps.I.115-117, Ps.II.12, Ps.II.30, Ps.II.54-55, Ps.II.71, Ps.II.217, Vbh.335. In Pali commentaries, these eight states and nibbāna are collectively called 'nine transcendent *dhamma*s' (*nava lokuttarā dhammā*)

334 Note that the word '*arahattamagga*' (path to emancipation) in the list, used in the Buddhist sense, refers to the state accomplished by the 'noble one who is faring along for the fruit of emancipation' (*arahattaphalasacchikiriyāya paṭipanna*). It is different from that mentioned in a specific expression such as 'arahat, or the one who has attained to the path of arahat' ('*arahā vā arahattamaggaṃ vā samāpanno*' or the like) used among non-Buddhists or found in the Buddha's conversation with non-Buddhist(s). For an example of such a non-Buddhist expression, see A.II.42, Ud.7, Ud.65-66. In this expression, the words *arahat* and *arahattamagga* come together without mentioning other Buddhist noble states, even though the Pali *Nikāya*s are well aware of the different levels of noble fruits. For examples of *Nikāya* passages that mention Buddhist noble fruits, see D.II.255, M.II.255, S.II.167, S.V.202, A.IV.204. In such a non-Buddhist expression, the word *arahat* does not strictly denote an individual who has achieved the highest goal of Buddhism, but rather any holy person (*ariyan*) in a broader sense, probably similar to the word 'saint' in English. Hence, the word '*arahattamagga*' in the non-Buddhist sense refers to any individual who has found the *ariyan* path, rather than strictly to 'the Buddhist noble one who is faring along toward penetration of the fruit of emancipation' (*arahattaphalasacchikiriyāya paṭipanna*) as in Buddhist usage.

returner (*anāgāmī*), or an Arhat (*arahanta*) respectively. These four fruits are identified with the fruits of the Buddhist monkhood.[335] They are *dhamma*s to be known experientially.[336]

Even though these paths and fruits are mostly related to Buddhist noble disciples, the epithets of the Buddha as '*arahaṃ sammāsambuddha*' (the perfect self-enlightened Arhat) indicates that he has attained the highest state of the list. And as those transcendental states are to be attained in succession, it can be concluded that the Buddha has realised all those transcendental paths and fruits in his enlightenment.

While these paths and fruits could be said to be mental states, qualities, or elements, as classed in the first category of the meanings of *dhamma*; they are also realities to be attained. In regard to their relation to the noble truths, the four paths may be identified roughly with the fourth truth, and the four fruits with the third.[337] Therefore, the realities that the Buddha realised in his enlightenment may be summarised broadly as the four noble truths, including the noble eightfold path, four transcendent paths and their corresponding fruits, dependent origination, and *nibbāna*.

The realisation of these *dhamma*s yields unmeasurable insights to the enlightened ones regarding the realities of the world, the cycle of rebirth, and that which lies beyond. These are manifested in the wider range of Buddhist usage of the term *dhamma*, which is generally said to signify doctrine or teaching, as placed in the following category.

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[335] D.III.227-228, S.V.25.

[336] D.III.277. Here, the phrase 'to be known' is translated from the Pali '*abhiññeyyā*.' The Pali term *abhiññā* means higher or supernatural knowledge, and is associated with concentrated mental states at the level of the four *jhāna*s. Thus these four fruits may not be said to be intellectually comprehended but rather to be experienced spiritually through the power of a highly concentrated mind.

[337] *Sutta* references to the *magga* generally refers to 'the noble eightfold path' which is mentioned in the Pali canon as *the best* of all 'conditioned states' (A.II.34). The four transcendent *magga*s are also understood by the Theravādins as 'conditioned' (Kv.318, Kv.580.). Hence, they should be equivalent, at least roughly, for 'the noble eightfold path' can by no means a *higher* state than the 'four transcendent *magga*s.' Also, as understood by the Theravādins, the four *phala*s are 'unconditioned' (Kv.580-581). Hence, they should be roughly equivalent to the third truth, according to the different levels of spiritual realisation. Further discussion will be made below in the section regarding 'manners in which *dhamma*s are realised.'

5. *Dhamma* as Teaching

Closely related to the meaning of *dhamma* as 'reality' or 'truth' is its usage in the sense of 'teaching.' It is evident that *dhamma* in this sense represents a common Indian usage in all periods. Whenever one asks 'to whose *dhamma* is your consent given?,'[338] one means 'to whose *teaching*....' Also in the early Buddhist usage, we usually find phrases such as '*dhammaṃ deseyyaṃ*,' meaning 'I would preach *dhamma*;' '*dhammo pakāsito*,' meaning 'the *dhamma* announced (by the Buddha);' '*dhammaṃ suṇeyyaṃ*,' translated as 'I should listen to *dhamma*;' or '*sutadhamma*' 'having heard *dhamma*.' *Dhamma* in these instances refers to 'teaching.'

This meaning of *dhamma* covers six following definitions provided in Pali commentaries:[339]

1) *desanā* = preaching, sermon, tenet
2) *pariyatti* = scripture, formulated doctrine, text, authoritative teaching to be learned, memorised, mastered
3) *buddhabhāsita* = that which was spoken by the Buddha
4) *tripiṭakapāli* = the texts that are the three *piṭaka*s
5) *ñāya* = proper manner, propriety
6) *ācāra* = proper conduct

Among these, the first four definitions are straightforward. The remaining, while carrying the notion of good conduct, possess also the meaning of teaching in a prescriptive context, i.e., practice.

Scholarly discussions regarding *dhamma* in this sense present both similarities and differences. For example, among the ten definitions of *dharma* listed in the

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[338] *Kassa tvaṃ dhammaṃ rocesi* = 'To whose *dhamma* do you give your consent?' or 'Whose *dhamma* do you like?' Vin.I.40-41, M.I.170, M.III.238.

[339] Carter, *Dhamma*, op. cit., pp. 157-159.

Vyākhyāyukti mentioned earlier, Bu-ston[340] explains four of them in the sense of doctrine: virtue (*sīla*), the path (*magga*), *nibbāna*, and scripture. Of the four, the first three items are regarded as 'the highest doctrine,' for they put an end to every kind of defilement and phenomenal existence.[341] Verbal expression of these *dharma*s is 'scripture.' It is also said to be doctrine, for it prescribes a means of destroying all defilements.

Two characteristics of scripture, as 'verbal expression of the truth' and as the 'prescription of a means to realise it,' agree with the two aspects of 'doctrine' maintained by some contemporary scholars. Gombrich, for example, defines *dharma* in the sense of doctrine in two aspects: descriptive and prescriptive. The former is 'the Buddha's account *describing* his experience' and the latter is 'a message *prescribing* what to do about it.'[342] He calls the former 'truth' and the latter 'law.'[343] A similar idea is found in Collin's work, when he draws attention to the twin aspects of description and prescription present in the Pali canon.[344]

Bu-ston classifies '*dharma*' in the sense of doctrine in two different ways. On the one hand, he defines it as 'theory' and 'practice.' Theory is defined as 'the word that introduces learners into the sphere of practice.'[345] These two aspects of doctrine agree with the Pali expressions of *dhamma* as '*pariyatti*' and '*paṭipatti*' respectively.[346] On the other hand, he classifies '*dhamma* as doctrine' into scripture and its subject-matter. The former is the verbal expression of the latter which Bu-ston classifies further as 'fruit' (*phala*) and 'path' (*marga*). In the *Abhidharmakośa*, Vasubandhu defines fruit as

[340] Bu-ston, op. cit., p. 21.

[341] In this respect, these three items are considered 'realities,' being the content of the 'teaching.' Hence, it appears that the word 'doctrine' in Bu-ston's writing refers to 'what the Buddha taught about' rather than to his 'verbal teaching.'

[342] Gethin, "He Who Sees Dhamma Sees Dhammas," op. cit., p. 529 referring to Richard Gombrich, *How Buddhism Began*, op. cit., pp. 34-36.

[343] Gombrich, *Theravāda Buddhism*, op. cit., p. 2.

[344] Collins, "On the Very Idea of the Pali Canon," op. cit., p. 102.

[345] Bu-ston, op. cit., p. 22.

[346] Gethin, "He Who Sees Dhamma Sees Dhammas," op. cit., p. 540, note 44.

'deliverance from passions' and path as 'that, by means of which such is attained.' The *Uttaratantra* also defines both of them as 'that which represents liberation from passions' and 'that which leads to it (liberation)' respectively.[347]

Bu-ston's classification of doctrine as 'scripture' and 'its subject-matter' is similar to its separation into 'text' and 'its content' made by other scholars. For instance, Gethin puts it: "[*D*]*hamma* can mean the teaching of the Buddha and the texts that contain those teachings, defined as 'the word of the Buddha contained in the Three Baskets.'" [348] However, small variations in their explanations of the word 'doctrine' or 'teaching' can also be observed. It seems that 'subject-matter' in Bu-ston's description refers to the reality, rather than mere 'word' or 'speech;' while Gethin's states clearly that what he means by the 'teaching of the Buddha' refers to the 'word' as contained in the *Tipiṭaka*.

Since *dhamma* in the sense of reality was already discussed in the previous category, this category deals mainly with its usage as 'doctrine' or 'teaching' in the sense of 'the Buddha's words.' As stated earlier, scholars suggest two different functions of *dhamma* as teaching: description and prescription. The former refers to verbal expression of the reality or truth, while the latter signifies practice - the means to realise the reality.

Generally, these two aspects of the Buddhist teaching appear together. Whenever one is taught to do something, a description is usually provided in minute detail as to what it is, how and why one has to do so, and so on.[349] Nevertheless, monastic disciplines can be more prescriptive, as is usually indicated by the words 'should' and 'must.'[350] Gombrich describes this as a

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[347] Here, the 'fruit' or 'result' is identified further as *nirvāṇa*, the quiescence of birth, senescent, death, displeasure and pain.

[348] Gethin, "He Who Sees Dhamma Sees Dhammas," op. cit., p. 522. Herein, 'the word of the Buddha' refers to his teaching, while 'the Three Baskets' refer to 'the texts that contain the teaching.'

[349] For example, see D.III.180-193, M.I.6-12.

[350] For example, see Vin.I.46ff.

case of the word losing its descriptive aspect and becoming merely 'rule.'[351] On the contrary, the *Abhidhamma* is more descriptive, for it usually contains lists of items that represent a systematic elaboration of personal meditative experience.[352] This part of the text appears to be more scholastic than the rest. Gombrich refers to the *Abhidhamma* use of *dhamma* as its most popular usage, where it loses its prescriptive facet and thus refers to the 'content of thought' or 'object of thinking.'[353] Bronkhorst supposes this to have originated from Buddhist attempts to memorise the mental states described in the teaching.[354]

In any case, the prescriptive aspect seems to be dominant in the Buddhist teaching, as was declared by the Buddha himself regarding the reason for his refusal to answer certain questions:

> It is neither beneficial nor wholesome nor relevant to genuine pure conduct. It is neither conducive to the turning away (from worldliness), nor to passionlessness, nor to cessation, nor to peace, nor to insight, nor to enlightenment, nor to *nibbāna*.[355]

Such a declaration indicates a major characteristic of the Buddha's speech, that it must contribute those benefits to his audience. Of things concerning either past, future, or present, the *Tathāgata* would reveal *only* what is real, true, and conducive to good.[356] It could be said, therefore, that the Buddha provides the description in accordance with prescribed practice, but that the latter must be performed in order to lead the listener(s) towards well-being, either in this life or in the next rebirth, or towards the final goal of Buddhism. This is similar to his explanation elsewhere.[357]

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[351] Gombrich, *How Buddhism Began*, op. cit., p. 35.

[352] For example, see Ds.9ff, Vbh.1ff.

[353] Ibid. Here, Gombrich seems to regard any meditative experience as being 'thought.'

[354] Bronkhorst, "Some Uses of Dharma in Classical Indian Philosophy," op. cit., p. 733.

[355] D.III.136. *Na h' etaṃ āvuso attha-saṃhitaṃ na dhamma-saṃhitaṃ na ādibrahmacariyakaṃ na nibbidāya na virāgāya na nirodhāya na upasamāya na abhiññāya na sambodhāya na nibbānāya saṃvattati.*

[356] D.III.134-135.

[357] *Abhayarājakumāra-sutta*. M.I.395. See also note 128.

As Gombrich rightly observes,[358] it appears that the Buddha has no interest in philosophical discussion. What he teaches is only for the audience's practice and the resulting benefit anticipated. His occasional discussions with outsiders also appear to be performed with the same purpose in mind.

As is evident throughout the Buddhist texts, the content of Buddhist teachings varies from the level of general morality to that of the final destruction of all defilements. Thus, Buddhist teachings may be classified according to three levels of benefits to the audience:

1) Teaching advantageous to the present

The teachings of this level refer to practices (*dhamma*s) that contribute to the well-being of practitioners in this lifetime. These include the moral or appropriate practices of everyday life. For example, the merchant's practice, announced in the *Vanijja-sutta*[359] is conducive to business success. The four qualities of sympathy (*saṅgaha-vatthu*) are a contribution to good personal inter-relations.[360] The five positive qualities[361] of a sick monk are helpful for nursing, while the opposite five qualities make a sick monk hard to take care of, and thus make nursing harder.[362]

2) Teaching advantageous to the next life

The teachings of this level relate to practices which result in a desirable rebirth. Even though one might be destined to reach the ultimate goal, namely the perfect enlightenment, happy rebirth is still a desirable aim on the way to the final destiny. In general, it is said frequently that a person who is endowed with the correct view and the corresponding actions, wholesome actions or good

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358 Gombrich, *How Buddhism Began*, op. cit., p. 63. Here, he writes, "[T]he Buddha, as he clearly stated on other occasions, was interested in saving men, not in philosophy."

359 A.II.81-2.

360 A.II.32.

361 These are 1) doing what is beneficial, 2) being moderate in what is beneficial, 3) taking the prescribed medicine, 4) informing the well-wishing nurse of the true symptoms or progress, and 5) tolerating the unpleasant symptoms or pain.

362 A.III.143.

deeds[363] will certainly be reborn in a happy state (*sugati*) after death.[364] Unwholesome deeds lead to the opposite states.[365] Certain deeds lead to different levels of happy states. For example, the attainment of different *jhāna* levels contributes to rebirth in different levels of the Brahmā world,[366] while many other good deeds lead to rebirth in the *kāmāvacara* heavens.[367]

3) Teachings which contribute to the ultimate goal

The teachings of the third level are the heart of the Buddhist teaching, the teachings conducive to the perfect destruction of all fetters (*kilesa*s, *āsava*s, *saṃyojana*s). The other two levels of teachings could bring about a gradual cultivation of one's conscience, and are thus preliminary to self-purification at the third level to which the teaching will lead eventually. As the Buddha usually declares, his teaching is conducive to the rolling back (*nibbidā*) from worldliness, to passionlessness (*virāga*), cessation (*nirodha*), peace (*upasama*), insight (*abiññā*), enlightenment (*sambodha*), and *nibbāna*.[368] In this manner, the Buddha's teaching leads finally to the realisation of reality. That being the case, the Buddha's teachings and truth or reality are always related.

Inter-relation and Distinction between Reality and Teaching

As has been observed occasionally from the beginning of the present work, there is a close connection between the two meanings of *dhamma*, namely, 'teaching' and 'truth' or 'reality.' As Bu-ston explains, the teaching is the 'verbal expression' of truth, and truth is the 'subject-matter' of teaching.[369] He describes the Buddha's teaching as a description of 'truth' and a prescription of the means to realise it.

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[363] Buddhism usually classifies actions or deeds in three ways: physical, verbal, and mental.

[364] M.I.289.

[365] For example, see D.I.82.

[366] A.II.126-128.

[367] D.III.259, M.I.289, M.III.100, Vv.48.

[368] D.I.189, D.I.192.

[369] Bu-ston, op. cit., p. 21.

In terms of practice, on the one hand, the Buddha's teaching is generally accepted to be delivered from his personal experience, i.e., his realisation of the reality or truth. In other words, his realisation of the reality gives rise to his teaching. So the teaching can be regarded as 'truth externalised' or 'experience externalised.'[370] On the other hand, his teaching leads the audience to the realisation of the actual truth. Hence, sometimes the truth or reality realised is regarded as 'teaching internalised.'[371]

In this manner, the meanings of *dhamma* as truth or reality and teaching are always intertwined and hard to separate completely from one another. The limitation of human language contributes greatly to the confusion between these two aspects of *dhamma*. One particular word is employed to refer to both a particular object and its title. In the same manner, the title 'four noble truths' refers to both 'the truths themselves' and the teaching regarding them. Nevertheless, it is possible to distinguish these two aspects of *dhamma* in the course of practice and during the process of realisation of reality or enlightenment.

A study of the context of some recorded *sutta*s may contribute to a better understanding in regard to how and to what extent teaching and truth are related. In the *Siṃsapā-sutta*, the Buddha compares his teaching with a handful of leaves, and the truth he realised with the amount of leaves in the whole forest.[372] The reason given afterward is the same as that he explains elsewhere, that he would teach only what is beneficial, wholesome, relevant to genuine pure conduct, and conducive to turning away, dispassion, cessation, peace, insight, enlightenment, and *nibbāna.* These are the four truths. In the light of this *sutta*, the Buddha's teaching can be regarded as a *limited* description of the

[370] For example, Horner calls the teaching 'an externalised body of doctrine.' Horner, *The Early Buddhist Theory of Man Perfected*, op. cit., p. 40.

[371] As Eliade explains, "All the truths revealed by the Buddha must be tested in the yogic fashion - that is, must be meditated and experienced." Eliade, op. cit., p. 175.

[372] S.V.437-438.

truth or reality he realised.[373] While the meaning of *dhamma* as 'teaching' covers a broad area of what is recorded in the canon, the meaning of *dhamma* as 'truth' seems to be even broader, for it subsumes also what the Buddha has not taught.

Elsewhere, the Buddha tells the venerable Ānanda that he has no 'teacher's fist.'[374] This means he has taught his disciples *all* that he should, without hiding anything. Superficially, this seems to contradict the above statement that he does not teach everything he knows. However, considering the reason given in the above *sutta*, the description 'no teacher's fist' seems to convey the message that what he has taught is *all that is necessary* for his disciples to rely on themselves.

The sermon that follows reinforces the above assumption. Herein, the Buddha delivers the message that his disciples should have themselves as refuge, and have *dhamma* as their refuge. While it is true that the term *dhamma* in this sermon can be interpreted in a broad sense as 'teaching' or 'what the Buddha taught,' its sense as 'soteriological imperative' is clear. For only the teaching that has been 'practised,' 'internalised,'[375] especially when it is 'realised spiritually,' can be one's own refuge, while 'mere information' cannot. *Dhamma* as refuge thus refers to 'teaching' at the level of 'truth' or at least 'quality,' rather than merely 'words of the Buddha.' This reinforces the above statement that the prescriptive aspect of Buddhist teaching predominates its descriptive facet. As Gethin states,

> [I]n certain important respects the nature of the knowledge that the Buddha was trying to convey to his pupils is more akin to a skill, like knowing how to play a musical

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[373] As is well-known, the Buddha chooses to avoid philosophical discussion, as it usually leads the audience away from practice by encouraging mere thinking, theorising, and argumentation, and thus preventing one from the anticipated fruits and goals of Buddhist practice. M.I.426-427. The Buddha thus states clearly that which he is prepared to teach or answer, and that which he is not, as described in this *sutta*. This point is important for an understanding of the nature of the Buddhist teaching(s).

[374] D.II.100.

[375] The internalisation of the teaching may be understood also as the recitation and contemplation that brings about the correct understanding of the teaching which, in turn, brings about joy and happiness conducive to concentration and insight.

> instrument, than a piece of information, such as what time the Manchester train leaves tomorrow.[376]

In this description, the identification of Buddhist *dhamma* with 'skill' implies the practice required. As is also evident in a discourse, a person who practises the *dhamma*[377] is regarded as truly honouring the Buddha; while material worship, even from gods, is of lesser worth.[378]

This point is even clearer in the Buddha's explanation to a brahmin named Gaṇaka Moggallāna[379] regarding the Buddhist course of practice. In the discourse, the Buddha relates to the brahmin the successive training given to monastic members.[380] It is a step-by-step instruction that leads toward the elimination of defilements. Generally, the primary instruction is morally correct physical conduct and self-restraint in regard to monastic disciplines (*pāṭimokkha*). Once the monk becomes endowed with such qualities, the Buddha would instruct him to guard the door of sense-faculties (*indriya*, *āyatana*). Further instructions are given when the previous steps have been accomplished. Detailed descriptions are provided of how to pursue the prescriptive instructions. The accomplishment of former steps then becomes a firm foundation for the practice of further steps in the process. The practice leads the practitioner from physical moral training (*sīla*) to mental practice (*samādhi*), and eventually to the realisation of truth and the pleasant living of emancipated disciples (Arhats).

The instruction given in the discourse is the Buddha's prescriptive 'teaching.' The practice may be regarded as *dhamma* in the sense of 'conduct.' It provides descriptions of the details of the practice and sometimes of its benefits. Such

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[376] Rupert Gethin, *The Foundations of Buddhism* (Oxford [England]; New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 36.

[377] P. *dhammānudhammapaṭipanno sāmīcipaṭipanno anudhammacārī.*

[378] D.II.138.

[379] M.III.1-7.

[380] While the wording of the instruction gives an impression that it refers mainly to monks, it can be understood that, in fact, the instruction is being delivered to both monks and nuns, as monastic members in general. As stated in note 129, this work conforms to the same kind of personal referencing. Masculine terms are employed to refer to both male and female humans in general, as stated earlier. This is done for the sake of simplicity and to avoid creating an aukward construct in English expression.

descriptions refer either to *dhamma* as an 'element of practice' or to that in the sense of 'nature' or 'tendency.' Once the trainee undertakes the practice, the teaching (instruction) is 'internalised.' The qualities that arise from the accomplishment of the practice represent *dhamma* in the sense of physical and mental qualities. Further instruction contributes to higher qualities and finally to the spiritual realisation of reality. Thus, the Buddha's teaching, which has arisen from his realisation of reality, leads his disciples up to their own eventual realisation of reality. In other words, the realisation of reality takes priority in the course of a Buddha, while his teaching takes precedence in the practice of his disciples.

In summary, the teaching describes and prescribes 'why' one needs to realise the truths, 'how' one could practise oneself in order to realise them, 'what' truths are to be realised, and 'in which manner' they are to be realised. This study will now proceed to some of these aspects of the truths, as they appear in the teaching.

Some Rarely Mentioned Aspects of Buddhist *Dhamma*

Up to this point, the chapter has reviewed previous scholarly attempts to clarify the meanings of the Buddhist term *dhamma*. Therein, our study observed its indeterminable character. Scholars provided various classifications in order to explain its various meanings and the relationship between them. Some scholars noted also the dynamic sense of its meanings, and some referred to *dhamma* as 'events,' 'circumstances,' or 'dynamic properties' that 'do something.' The Sarvāstivāda tradition holds that *dharma*s, signifying 'forces' or 'energy' rather than substance, perform particular functions of their own.[381] After exploring all these, the chapter then employed a particular pattern of categorisation of the term's meanings to explain different aspects of *dhamma* as well as their relationship. It elaborated in particular the connection of the 'teaching' and

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[381] Cox, op. cit., pp.555-558.

'truth' which is significant to the interpretation of the compound *dhammakāya*, as mentioned in the research questions.

In the following, the chapter will address some additional aspects of *dhamma* that will contribute to further understanding of *dhammakāya*. First of all, it may be useful to examine closely in regard to what can be said about *dhamma* in different instances in the same Pali passage.

Within one Pali passage, the term *dhamma* may appear frequently. Different occurrences of the term, though in the same passage, can convey different meanings, as in the following example.

> Oḷārikassa kho ahaṃ Poṭṭhapāda atta-paṭilābhassa pahānāya dhammaṃ desemi, yathā paṭipannānaṃ vo saṃkilesikā dhammā pahīyissanti, vodāniyā dhammā abhivaḍḍhissanti, paññāpāripūriṃ vepullatañ ca diṭṭhe va dhamme sayaṃ abhiññā sacchikatvā upasampajja viharissathāti.
>
> D.I.195-6
>
> Poṭṭhapāda, for the abandonment of the coarse self-acquisition[382] that I teach the *dhamma*, according to which if you have walked along, defiling *dhamma*s will be abandoned, *dhamma*s pertaining to purification will grow, and you yourselves will live presently realising the full perfection and grandeur of wisdom with the higher knowledge.

In this instance, the term *dhamma* appears in the passage four times. Its first occurrence in the sentence '*dhammaṃ desemi*,' meaning 'I teach the *dhamma*,' carries the meaning of 'teaching.' The following context regarding the walking path, or the course of practice, suggests that the teaching in this instance is prescriptive.

In its second and third appearances qualitative components carrying particular meanings - *saṃkilesikā* and *vodāniyā* - are added to *dhamma*s in the sense of mental states. The former qualitative is unwholesome quality, while the latter is wholesome. These added titles or qualitative components then indicate functions of those *dhamma*s. In this instance, *saṃkilesika dhamma* functions as a 'defiling agent,' while *vodāniya dhamma* acts as a 'purifying agent.' The

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[382] Following this, there are two other paragraphs, with almost the same context, regarding the abandonment of two other kinds of self-acquisition, i.e. mind-made self and perception-made self. The details of these selves will be discussed in the next chapter, regarding 'body.'

incorporated verbs suggest what one can do with such *dhamma*s, i.e., abandoning the former, and developing the latter.

The last occurrence of *dhamma* in the passage is *diṭṭha dhamma* ‘the *dhamma* being seen.’ This is a specific Pali expression, representing the ‘present tense,’ or ‘what is happening presently.’ It is used mostly in the locative form, denoting ‘in’ or ‘at’ the present time. Sometimes it refers to one’s present lifetime, as distinct from one’s previous birth and the next rebirth.

On the whole, in this particular example, at least three aspects of the term *dhamma* are present: 1) its meaning 2) its quality and function and 3) what one should do with it.

Regarding *dhamma* representing truth or reality to be realised, it is sometimes also stated how it is realised, and what happens afterwards to the individual who has realised the *dhamma*. Therefore, the following section will discuss three further aspects regarding *dhamma*: 1) qualities and functions of *dhamma*s, 2) what could be done with *dhamma*s, 3) the manner in which *dhamma*s are realised, and its consequences.

Qualities, Functions, and Efficacy of *Dhamma*s

That *dhamma*s have their functions has been noted since the Vedic period. It is usually said that the general function of Vedic *dharma* is to uphold or to maintain.[383] Some scholars and traditional commentators have elaborated on Buddhist *dhamma* in a similar way. As cited above, Vasubandhu’s *Vyākhyāyukti* describes functions of *dharma*, as a maintainer or upholder, in accordance with its various meanings. According to Vasubandhu, the wholesome *dharma* functions in ‘upholding’ beings, i.e., preventing them from falling down to unfortunate realms or from falling away from the desirable

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[383] Brereton, “Dharman in the Ṛgveda,” op. cit., p. 450; Horsch, “From Creation Myth to World Law,” op. cit., p. 424.

In the former work, Brereton elaborates various meanings of *Ṛgvedic dharman*, based on its basic meaning as ‘foundation,’ without differentiation of neutral *dharman* and musculine *dharma*. In the latter, Horsch differentiates the neutral from the musculine *dharma*, defining the former as upholding or maintaining and the latter as upholder or maintainer.

states.[384] *Dharma*s used in different senses also function as sustainer or upholder in one way or another. Apart from *dharma* as path, fruit, and virtue; Vasubandhu's elaboration regarding *dharma* in other senses is somewhat similar to Vedic *dharma*. Pali commentators explain it in the same way. In the elaboration regarding *dhamma* the Buddhists take as refuge, the commentator(s) identifies it with the noble path and *nibbāna*, saying that it upholds the individual who has attained it from falling down to the unfortunate realms or prevents him from future encounter within the cycle of rebirth.[385]

Cox, referring to the Sarvāstivādin *Mahāvibhāṣā*, explains general roles of conditioned and unconditioned *dharma*s differently. A conditioned *dharma*, as can be seen in the elements of the 'dependent origination,' itself arising through an effective co-operation between a particular generative cause and other necessary conditions, functions as a generative cause or a conditioning that assists in the arising of other conditioned *dharma*(s). In this way, conditioned *dharma*s function collaboratively in maintaining the cycle of rebirth. As Horsch rightly observes, the law of dependent origination (*paṭicca samuppāda*) is harmonious with Vedic natural law. In contrast, an example of unconditioned *dharma*s - space (*ākāśa*), due to its lack of any generative activities, functions as 'a non-obstructing condition with regard to the various material elements of space.'[386] Here, its function is described as 'not-doing' something.

In the Pali canon, titles or the qualitative components added to the term *dhamma* indicate specific functions of those *dhamma*s, as discussed earlier. At the same time, the components added usually indicate also the quality of the *dhamma*. Qualities and functions of *dhamma* are, therefore, not totally separable. For instance, four *iddhipāda dhamma*s or the '*dhamma*s as bases for success or psychic power' are contributive to success in a general sense, and to

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[384] Bu-ston, op. cit., p. 20.

[385] The same is said at DA.I.229, MA.I.131, AA.II.107, UdA.287, ItA.II.44, etc.

[386] Cox, op. cit., p. 556-557 referring to the *Abhidharmamahāvibhāṣāśāstra* 75 p. 389a1-2. (T.1545. Translated by Xuanzang.)

supranatural power in the contemplative sense. *Vesārajjakaraṇa dhamma*s '*dhamma*s as confidence-maker,' are qualities that are conducive to a practitioner's intrepidity. It is the courage that accords with the *dhamma*s practised and achieved. *Nāthakaraṇa dhamma*s or the '*dhamma*s as refuge-maker,' refers to *dhamma*s, the accomplishment of which makes the practitioner his own refuge. These titles thus indicate the qualities of the *dhamma*s and signify their functions or capacity.

The qualities or functions of *dhamma*s are categorised sometimes into main general functions. For example, in the *Dasuttara-sutta*,[387] some *dhamma*s are regarded as helpful for religious practice and attainment (*bahukāra dhamma*). They thus perform the function of supporting one's practice. *Dhamma*s classed in this group are such as *appamāda* 'vigilance,' *sati* 'mindfulness,' *sampajañña* 'self-awareness,' *sappurisa-saṃseva* 'association with a righteous fellow,' *saddhamma-savana* 'listening to the righteous one's teaching,' and *dhammānudhammapaṭipatti* 'practice in accordance with propriety.' Some *dhamma*s are classed as 'conducive to relinquishment of religious practice and attainment' (*hānabhāgiya dhamma*s). These are such as *ayoniso-manasikāra* 'improper attention,' *dovacassatā* 'obstinance,' and *pāpamittatā* 'having evil friend(s).' *Dhamma*s of opposite characteristics from such class are entitled '*dhamma*s that are conducive to progress in religious practice and attainment' (*visesabhāgiya dhamma*s). Examples of these *dhamma*s are *yoniso-manasikāra* 'proper attention,' *sovacassatā* 'suavity,' and *kalyāṇamittatā* 'having a virtuous friend.'

Besides the qualitative components added, the surrounding context also indicates a particular function of *dhamma* in each instance. For example, in the *Saṅgīti-sutta*, the six *dhamma*s that call for remembrance are listed. The first of the list is the physical action associated with loving kindness (*metta-kāyakamma*) to fellow monks. It is described in the *sutta* as follows:

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[387] D.III.272-292.

> idh' āvuso bhikkhuno mettaṃ kāyakammaṃ paccupaṭṭhitaṃ hoti sabrahmacārīsu āvi c' eva raho ca, ayam pi dhammo sāraṇīyo piyakaraṇo garukaraṇo saṃgahāya avivādāya sāmaggiyā ekibhāvāya saṃvattati
>
> D.III.245
>
> Brothers, kind physical action toward fellow monks has been present both outwardly and inwardly. This *dhamma* is conducive to remembrance, calls for love and respect, contributive to assembling, non-dispute, concord, and unity.

Here, the physical action associated with loving kindness towards fellow monks is described as a quality contributive to the unity of the community. Such could be either the quality, function, or capacity of the *dhamma*.

The capacity of a *dhamma* is sometimes implied in the passage. In the *Ariyapariyesana-sutta*,[388] a person who is so attached to five kinds of sensual pleasure is said to be under Māra's controlling power and could be manipulated to its favour. A wise one who understands the risk of such attachment would find release from it. A monk who has attained any of the four *jhāna*s or *arūpajhāna*s is entitled the one who blinds Māra, who leaves no footprint (for it to seek), who has destroyed Māra's eye, who has become invisible to the evil one.[389]

In this *sutta*, the metaphor of blinding Māra does not signify the final emancipation, for the destruction of defilements has not yet been done. Here, the metaphor is made according to the criterion set at the beginning of the passage, that Māra is related to sensual pleasure. The attainment of the *jhāna*s destroys Māra's vision because, while abiding in those states, one is detached from sensual pleasure. This is clear from the depiction of the experience in the first *jhāna*:

> … having been secluded from sensual pleasure and from unwholesome states, the monk enters and abides in the first *jhāna*, which is accompanied by thought (*vitakka*) and sustained thought (*vicāra*), filled with joy (*pīti*) and happiness (*sukha*) born of seclusion.[390]

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[388] M.I.173-175.

[389] *ayaṃ vuccati bhikkhave bhikkhu: andhamakāsi Māraṃ, apadaṃ vadhitvā Māracakkhuṃ adassanaṃ gato pāpimato*. M.I.174.

[390] (*so*) *bhikkhu vivicc'eva kāmehi vivicca akusalehi dhammehi savitakkaṃ savicāraṃvivekajaṃ pītisukhaṃ paṭhamaṃ jhānaṃ upasampajja viharati*. M.I.174.

Because the monk who abides in any *jhāna* is detached from sensual pleasure, thus a function of *jhāna*s is to part one from sense desire.

It is clear from this instance that the efficacy of Buddhist *dhamma*s is not independent. In other words, the *dhamma*s themselves cannot function on their own, without being practised or attained. That is, their efficacy depends on whether or not they have been practised, or realised spiritually.

The efficacy of some *dhamma*s requires constant practice and effort, as we usually see in the Pali canon a phrase indicating this - *bhāvitā bahulīkatā*, meaning 'having been cultivated, practised frequently or sufficiently' (the *dhamma* will lead to such and such result). Sometimes, we find a similar phrase composed of verbs of the same roots, also indicating the effort, but describing the activities as being performed currently - *bahulīkaronto, bhāvento*, meaning 'cultivating, doing frequently' (then the practitioner accomplishes such and such result). Sometimes, a long phrase is used instead to indicate that, with a firm practice, the *dhamma* could lead to the anticipated result. The phrase usually employed is: '*bhāvitā bahulīkatā yānikatā vatthukatā anuṭṭhitā paricitā susamāraddhā*,' meaning 'having been cultivated, practised frequently, mastered, made as basis, done, accumulated, undertaken thoroughly.' The phrase denotes that, with regular practice of the *dhamma*, it becomes the practitioner's habit or nature. Once one has thus mastered it, the *dhamma* leads one to the expected goal. It is the condition for the effectiveness of the *dhamma*(s). Therefore, the function and efficacy of a *dhamma* is related to an activity one performs regarding it, as will be discussed below.

What Should be Done with *Dhamma*s

The dominant prescriptive character of Buddhist teaching necessitates practice or activities to be performed in accordance with different *dhamma*s. Thus, at times when the Pali passage indicates the capacity of a particular *dhamma*, a prescription is provided also as to what should be done with that *dhamma*.

As stated earlier, an inclusion of a qualitative component to the term *dhamma* assigns a new connotation to this initially neutral term. Besides, the indication of 'what to do with it' could be added also in the same way. For example, in the *Dasuttara-sutta*, 550 *dhamma*s are listed along with their brief descriptions.[391] They are grouped into ten categories:

1. *bahu-kāra dhamma*	helpful *dhamma* (for religious practice and attainment)
2. *bhāvetabba dhamma*	*dhamma* that should be cultivated
3. *pariññeyya dhamma*	*dhamma* that should be understood
4. *pahātabba dhamma*	*dhamma* that should be abandoned
5. *hāna-bhāgiya dhamma*	*dhamma* that is conducive to decline
6. *visesa-bhāgiya dhamma*	*dhamma* that is leading to progress
7. *duppaṭivijjha dhamma*	*dhamma* that is hard to penetrate
8. *uppādetabba dhamma*	*dhamma* that should be generated
9. *abhiññeyya dhamma*	*dhamma* that should be known with higher (supranormal) knowledge
10. *sacchikātabba dhamma*	*dhamma* that should be attained, realised, experienced

Among these ten categories, the titles of categories 1, 5, and 6 suggest the functions of the *dhamma*s. Class 1 represents *dhamma*s that are helpful for religious practice and attainment. Class 5 signifies *dhamma*s that are conducive to relinquishment of religious practice and attainment, while class 6 is the group of *dhamma*s possessing opposite characteristics and qualities - the *dhamma*s conducive to progress. Detailed explanation of these was made in the previous section.

[391] D.III.272-292.

Class 7 signifies *dhamma*s of such great profundity or deep nuance that they are hard to penetrate (*duppaṭivijjha*). Examples of *dhamma*s provided as belonging to this class are such as 'immediacy of succession in mental concentration' (*anantarika cetosamādhi*), causes and conditions of impurities and purities of beings,[392] qualities of a righteous man. The qualitative '*duppaṭivijjha*' (hard to penetrate) indicates the profundity which is a quality or characteristic of these *dhamma*s, but not their functions.

Apart from these four categories, the titles of the other six categories of *dhamma*s prescribe what one should do with them. Class 2 '*dhamma* that should be cultivated' signifies various kinds of Buddhist contemplative practice. Examples of *dhamma*s belonging to this class are mindfulness going into the body (*kāyagatāsati*),[393] concentration and insight meditation (*samatha-vipassanā*), three kinds of *samādhi*,[394] four foundations of mindfulness (*satipaṭṭhāna*), fivefold concentration (*pañcaṅgika samādhi*), six recollections (*anussati*), seven constituents of enlightenment (*sambojjhaṅga*), and the noble eightfold path (*ariya aṭṭhaṅgika magga*).

Class 3 '*dhamma* that should be understood,' generally refers to the common place entities. From the Buddhist viewpoint, these *dhamma*s are illusory to mental perception, and thus subject to desire and attachment. They should be understood 'as they really are.' These include contact connected with the depravities and pertaining to attachment (*phassa sāsava upādāniya*), name and form (*nāma-rūpa*), three types of sensation (*vedanā*), four kinds of food (*āhāra*), five aggregates subject to clinging (*upādāna-khandha*), eight matters of worldly concern (*lokadhamma*), and the like.

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[392] *Yo ca hetu yo ca paccayo sattānaṃ saṃkilesāya, yo ca hetu yo ca paccayo sattānaṃ visuddhiyā*. D.III.274.

[393] This can be interpreted as 'contemplation on body.' See Anālayo, *Satipaṭṭhāna: The Direct Path to Realization* (Birmingham: Windhorse, 2003), p. 121.

[394] Here, three kinds of *samādhi* are 1) *samādhi* with both mental application (*vitakka*) and sustained thought (*vicāra*), 2) *samādhi* with sustained thought but without mental application, and 3) *samādhi* with neither mental application nor sustained thought.

*Dhamma*s belonging to category 4, i.e., 'those that should be abandoned,' are defilements and fetters of all levels. These are causes and conditions conducive to the endless cycle of rebirth. These *dhamma*s are such as conceit or egotism (*asmimāna*), ignorance (*avijjā*), different kinds of craving (*taṇhā*), four kinds of *dhamma*s comparable to the flood that sweeps one away from emancipation (*ogha*), five obstacles to concentration (*nīvaraṇa*), seven kinds of latent bias (*anusaya*),

Class 8 is the group of dhammas that should be generated (*uppādetabba*). These mean various kinds of *ñāṇa* or knowledge arising from contemplation or insight,[395] six kinds of mindful dwelling with neutral feeling (*satatavihāra*), and different kinds of proper perceptions (*saññā*).[396] Once generated, they then contribute to further understanding in *dhamma*s of a higher degree of profundity.

*Dhamma*s classed in category 9 are related to profound nature or natural phenomena; these can be known through higher knowledge (*abhiññeyya*) only. The distinction between this category and category 3 is not obvious. Elsewhere, this category of *dhamma*s is not separated, but included in the same category of *dhamma*s to be understood in general (*pariññeyya*).[397] Some Pali passages express even more specifically that the *dhamma*s are to be understood through higher knowledge (*abhiññā pariññeyya*).[398] This seems to specify that 'to be known/understood' (*pariññeyya*) means 'to be known through higher knowledge' (*abhiññā pariññeyya*). In the *Dasuttara-sutta*, however, '*dhamma*s

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395 Examples of these *dhamma*s are knowledges of events either in the past, present, or future (*atītaṃsañāṇa, paccuppannaṃsañāṇa, anāgataṃsañāṇa*).

396 Proper perceptions are correct perceptions regarding the world or nature, according to Buddhist viewpoint. For example, perception of bodies as unpleasant, of death as certain, of food as loathsome, of the whole world as unpleasing, of things or events as impermanent, of the impermanent as *dukkha*, of what is *dukkha* as not-self, and the perception of abandonment, dispassion, and cessation.

397 This happens when four activities, instead of six, are said to be activities to be performed in regard to different *dhamma*s. (See below for the list of four activities.) For example, the *dhammacakkappavattana-sutta* explains *dukkha-ariyasacca* 'the noble truth that is suffering' as that to be understood (*pariññeyya*). S.V.422. This seems to belong to class 3 listed in the presently mentioned *Dasuttara-sutta*. However, the environmental context indicates that such a noble truth is to be understood through *ñāṇa* 'knowledge arising from insight.' This will be discussed in detail below, in the section entitled 'manners in which *dhamma*s are realised.'

398 For example, see S.IV.29. Cf. note 410.

to be known through higher knowledge' (*abhiññeyya*) are categorised separately from '*dhamma*s to be known' (*pariññeyya*). This is probably to indicate the distinctiveness of manners in which *dhamma*s in the two groups are understood. That is to say, while *dhamma*s in category 3 might be learnt and understood partly by intellection,[399] *dhamma*s in category 9 could be known only through *ñāṇa* or knowledge arising from contemplation or insight, due to their profundity. Examples of *dhamma*s belonging to this category are different kinds of element (*dhātu*),[400] four noble truths (*ariya-sacca*), five occasions of release (*vimuttāyatana*),[401] the fact that all beings have to subsist on different kinds of food (*sabbe sattā āhāraṭṭhitikā*),[402] six kinds of excellency (*anuttariya*),[403] and successive dwellings (*anupubbavihāra*).[404]

Belonging to category 10 are *dhamma*s to be attained or directly experienced (*sacchikātabba dhamma*). These are such as Arhatship (*arahatta*), supranatural knowledge (*vijjā*), and supranatural powers (*abhiññā*), deliverances (*vimokkha*) and releases (*vimutti*), successive cessations (*anupubbanirodha*), four fruits of Buddhist nobles (*sāmaññaphala*), [405] five aggregates of *dhamma*s

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[399] Nevertheless, the perfect understanding of these *dhamma*s still requires *ñāṇa* (insight).

[400] These can refer to either four elements or six elements. The former comprises 1) earth element (*paṭhavī*), 2) water element (*āpo*), 3) fire element (*tejo*), 4) wind element (*vāyo*). The latter includes two additional elements: air element (*ākāsa*) and consciousness element (*viññāṇa*).

[401] These 'five occasions of release' refer to five ways of release or elimination of defilements. They are 1) listening to the teaching, 2) preaching Buddhist *dhamma*, 3) recitation of the teaching, 4) contemplation on the teaching, and 5) meditation. As explained at A.III.21-24, these five actions can initiate release only when they contribute to an 'understanding of the Buddha's teaching - the proper understanding that is conducive to joy (*pīti*) and then concentration (*samādhi*) which leads to mental release or the elimination of defilements.

[402] Four types of food are declared in the Pali canon: 1) material food, 2) food that is contact, 3) food that is mental intention, 4) food that is consciousness. Detailed discussion of these will be presented in the next chapter, regarding *kāya* 'body.'

[403] These refer to 1) supreme sight (*dassanānuttariya*), 2) supreme hearing (*savanānuttariya*), 3) supreme gain (*lābhānuttariya*), 4) supreme training (*sikkhānuttariya*), 5) supreme service or ministry (*pāricariyānuttariya*), and 6) supreme memory (*anussatānuttariya*). D.III.250, 281.

[404] These refer to four form-meditation (*rūpajhāna*s), four formless meditation (*arūpajhāna*s), and extinction of perception and feeling (*saññāvedayitanirodha*). D.III.265, 290.

[405] Four fruits of Buddhist nobles are fruit of Stream-attaining (*sotapattiphala*), fruit of Once-returning (*sakadāgāmiphala*), fruit of Non-returning (*anāgāmiphala*), and fruit of emancipation (*arahattaphala*).

(*dhammakkhandha*),[406] and ten qualities of the learned ones or the non-trainees (*asekha-dhamma*).[407]

On the whole, in regard to the ten listed in the *Dasuttara-sutta*, six activities should be performed with regard to different *dhamma*s:

1) to cultivate or develop

2) to understand correctly, properly

3) to abandon or eliminate

4) to generate or bring to pass

5) to understand thoroughly with higher knowledge

6) to attain or directly experience.

The overview of the *sutta*, as depicted above, suggests that these activities are connected, in order to form the whole process of Buddhist practice that will lead the practitioner to the highest goal, namely, *nibbāna*. Therefore, all activities are to be done together in order to serve the Buddhist soteriological purpose.

With respect to the five categories of meanings of *dhamma* proposed in this study, these six activities concern mainly the first four meanings of *dhamma*. However, *dhamma* in the fifth meaning - '*dhamma* as teaching,' is implied also within the soteriological process depicted in the canon. An example is the depiction of the five occasions of release (*vimuttāyatana*) which are classed as 'five *dhamma*s to be understood with higher knowledge,' as stated earlier.[408] Herein, it is explained that the detailed recitation of the learned and memorised doctrine (*pariyatti* or scripture) leads to the understanding of the subject matter

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[406] Five aggregates of *dhamma*s are virtue (*sīla*), concentration (*samādhi*), wisdom (*paññā*), release (*vimutti*), and knowledge of one's release (*vimutti-ñāṇadassana*).

[407] Ten qualities of a non-trainee (*asekhadhamma*) are 1) right view (*sammādiṭṭhi*), 2) right thought (*sammāsaṅkappa*), 3) right speech (*sammāvācā*), 4) right action (*sammākammanta*), 5) right livelihood (*sammā-ājīva*), 6) right effort (*sammāvāyāma*), 7) right mindfulness (*sammāsati*), 8) right concentration (*sammāsamādhi*), 9) right insight (*sammāñāṇa*), and 10) right release (*sammāvimutti*).

[408] See note 401.

(*attha*-, *dhamma-paṭisaṃvedī*). This, in turn, engenders delight (*pāmojja*), joy (*pīti*), and thus successively leads to the serenity of the physical body, happiness, and concentration of the mind (*cittaṃ samādhiyati*). Listening to the doctrine preached by the master or a fellow monk, or contemplation on the doctrine as well-learned and memorised, leads along the same line to the same result, namely, the concentration of the mind. Concentration developed through joy and delight is counted as a factor of enlightenment (*bojjhaṅga*), for it engenders insight and finally leads to the destruction of all fetters, i.e., the emancipation. It is therefore clear that, ultimately, the process of learning the teaching in the form of *pariyatti* 'scripture' - the authoritative teaching to be learned, memorised, and mastered – is also aimed to serve the Buddhist soteriological purpose.

In other passages, it is described that four activities, instead of six, should be carried out with regard to different *dhamma*s:

1) to cultivate or develop (*bhāvetabba*),

2) to attain or directly experience (*sacchikātabba*),

3) to abandon or eliminate (*pahātabba*),

4) to understand correctly, properly (*pariññeyyā*).

In the Pali canon, this classification of activities is found even more frequently than the list of six mentioned above.

A well-known example in this regard is the *Dhammacakkappavattana-sutta*, wherein, the four noble truths, i.e. *dukkha*, *samudaya*, *nirodha*, and *magga* are said to be understood, abandoned, experienced, and cultivated, respectively.[409] **A** similar group of four activities is mentioned elsewhere, wherein it is

[409] S.V.422. Cf. note 397.

specified that these activities must be performed with higher knowledge.[410] Here, *dhamma*s are classed into four types:

1. Five aggregates subject to clinging (*pañca upādāna-khandh*ā) must be understood with higher knowledge (*abhiññā pariññeyyā*).
2. Ignorance (*avijjā*) and craving for rebirth (*bhavataṇhā*) must be abandoned with higher knowledge (*abhiññā pahātabbā*).
3. Concentration and Insight meditation (*samatha*, *vipassanā*) must be cultivated with higher knowledge (*abhiññā bhāvetabbā*).
4. Supranormal knowledge (*vijjā*) and release (*vimutti*) must be experienced with higher knowledge (*abhiññā sacchikātabbā*).

Even though such details are not stated in the *Dhammacakkappavattana-sutta*, the surrounding context suggests the same that the four truths are to be realised through higher knowledge.

This fourfold list corresponds closely to the sixfold list found in the *Dasuttara-sutta*, stated earlier. Even though the soteriological purpose of Buddhist teaching/practice is more obvious in the fourfold activity, such a purpose is preserved intact in the sixfold classification, as discussed earlier.

Our study of these classifications of activities to be performed according to different *dhamma*s reinforces the 'soteriological imperative' character of Buddhist *dhamma*. Thus, among the four or six activities to be performed, the 'realisation of *dhamma*' can be considered the most relevant activity to the soteriological purpose of Buddhist teaching. The following section will discuss further the manners in which *dhamma*s are realised, which will be helpful for the re-evaluation of previous interpretation of *dhamma* in regard to the interpretation of *dhammakāya* in early Buddhist usage.

[410] For example, see M.III.289, S.V.52, A.II.246. See also note 398.

Manner in Which *Dhamma*s are Realised

On a number of occasions, Pali passages sketch out or imply the manner in which *dhamma*s are realised. Sometimes they depict the whole process of enlightenment. According to the Pali canon, the realisation of *dhamma*s is related mainly to meditative practices, as Crangle rightly observes.[411] This section will discuss two aspects of the realisation of *dhamma*s: 1) the rise of the eye seeing the *dhamma* (*dhamma-cakkhu*) and qualities of a Stream-attainer (*sotāpattiyaṅga*), and 2) general successive steps of the whole process of enlightenment.

1) The Rise of Eye Seeing the Dhamma*s and Qualities of a Stream-attainer*

The manner in which *dhamma*s are realised is sometimes implied in a number of compound words referring to a person who has realised the *dhamma*s. Those compounds are frequently found together in Pali passages depicting the arising of the *dhamma*-eye (*dhamma-cakkhu*), as in the following example:

> seyyathāpi nāma suddhaṃ vatthaṃ apagatakāḷakaṃ sammad eva rajanaṃ paṭigaṇheyya, evam eva tassa purisassa tasmiṃ yeva āsane virajaṃ vītamalaṃ dhammacakkhuṃ udapādi yaṃ kiñci samudayadhammaṃ sabbaṃ taṃ nirodha-dhamman ti. atha kho so puriso diṭṭhadhammo pattadhammo viditadhammo pariyogāḷhadhammo tiṇṇavicikiccho vigatakathaṃkatho vesārajjappatto aparappaccayo satthu sāsane
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> Vin.II.192, A.IV.186, 210, 213.
>
> Just as a piece of clean cloth that is deprived of dirt would well-absorb the dye, the pure and clear eye of *dhamma* (*dhammacakkhu*) arose to the man, on that current seat, that whatever whose nature is to arise, are those whose nature is to cease. At that time, the man has seen *dhamma*s, attained *dhamma*s, known *dhamma*s, dived into (penetrated) *dhamma*s; has crossed beyond doubt, deprived of uncertainty; has obtained confidence in the master's teaching, without having to rely on others.

The descriptions of the person in this passage manifest the manner in which he has realised the *dhamma*s. He has 'seen, attained, known, and dived into (plunged into/penetrated)' them. Once the *dhamma*s are thus experienced, the person then becomes unwaveringly confident in the Buddha's teaching, without having to rely on anyone else. In other words, the person has

[411] Crangle, *The Origin and Development of Early Indian Contemplative Practices*, op. cit., p. 140.

'witnessed' the *dhamma*s by himself, and thus becomes certain, without any doubt, that the *dhamma*s taught by the Buddha are genuine. Consequently, he comes to possess unshakable confidence, both in the Buddha and in the *dhamma*s.

The mention of the person who has crossed beyond doubt (*tiṇṇavicikiccho*) indicates a state of, at least, a Stream-attainer (*sotāpanna*) from whose mind doubt (*vicikicchā*) regarding the truth has been uprooted.[412] Such a quality of the unshakable confidence, arisen by means of witnessing the *dhamma*s, is a specific quality of a noble disciple, at least a Stream-attainer (*sotāpanna*). It is thus counted as 'a quality of a Stream-attainer' (*sotāpattiyaṅga*),[413] along with other qualities.[414]

A Stream-attainer is usually described as one who has crossed beyond doubt and become safe from all possibilities of falling into an unfortunate realm:

> In this discipline, Ānanda, a noble disciple is endowed with unwavering confidence in the Buddha … in the *dhamma* … in the Sangha … He is possessed of virtues beloved by the nobles - the virtues that are complete, untarnished, blameless, bringing independence, praiseworthy to the learned, incorrupt, conducive to concentration. This is, Ānanda, the mirror of *dhamma*, the way of *dhamma*, of which the noble one who is possessed, if desiring, should declare himself by himself: Destroyed for me is hell; destroyed is animal-rebirth; destroyed is the realm of ghosts; destroyed is the state of loss and woe, the realm of the miserable, the bad falling; I am the one who has attain to the Stream, not subject to falling away, certain and bound for (final/highest) enlightenment.[415]

In this passage, it is declared that a Stream-attainer (*sotāpanna*) is possessed of four qualities: 1) unwavering confidence in the Buddha 2) unwavering confidence in the *dhamma* 3) unwavering confidence in the *Saṅgha* 4) and being of the perfect, blameless virtues (*sīla*) that are conducive to concentration

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[412] A Stream-attainer (*sotāpanna*) is a noble disciple of the lowest degree of enlightenment. According to Buddhist philosophy, a stream attainer (*sotāpanna*) has uprooted three fetters: 1) the attachment that the assemblage of the five aggregates subject to clinging (*pañca-upādāna-khandha*) is 'myself' (*sakkāyadiṭṭhi*), 2) the doubt regarding truth or realities (*vicikicchā*), 3) the practice of discipline or ceremonial observances without right understanding, that could lead to strong attachment (*sīlabbataparāmāsa*). This is elaborated in detail in the *Mahāniddesa*. Nd1.27, 141, 507.

[413] Lit. 'quality of the attainment of the stream.'

[414] The criteria of determining the state of being such a noble one are entitled '*sotāpattiyaṅga*,' meaning 'attribute of a Stream-attainer.'

[415] D.II.93-94. Such a description of characteristics of a Stream-attainer are stated in many places of the Pali canon.

(*samādhi*). These four qualities are entitled 'the properties of a Stream-attainer (*sotāpattiyaṅga*).'[416] In other passages, it is explained also that a Stream-attainer has completely ceased from performing the five sins conducive to suffering,[417] has seen well (*sudiṭṭha*), and has penetrated well with wisdom (*paññāya suppaṭividdha*), the truth to be realised, that is, the truth of dependent causation, both in forward and reverse order.[418]

As the truth to be realised[419] is 'profound, hard to see, hard to comprehend, subtle, fine, beyond mere dialectic;'[420] the Buddhist *dhamma*s and the qualities of its founder, are usually subject to doubt for ordinary people. Only a person who has 'witnessed' the truth and its realisation can completely eradicate all doubts regarding the Buddha and his teachings. Having thus witnessed the truth, the person then becomes independent; he does not need to rely on others with respect to the right understanding of Buddhist doctrine. Having thus penetrated the realities and passed beyond doubt, a noble disciple can then totally 'quit' the five evils, as mentioned above. Therefore, the passage implies not only a realisation of the truth, but also a process of 'transformation' as its consequence.

Under the same title as the qualities of attaining the stream (*sotāpattiyaṅga*), a set of four activities is identified: 1) association with a virtuous one (*sappurisa-saṃseva*), 2) listening to his teaching (*saddhamma-savana*), 3) proper contemplation on the teaching heard (*yoniso manasikāra*), and 4) proper practice according to the teaching (*dhammānudhamma-paṭipatti*).[421]

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[416] S.II.69, S.V.343, S.V.365-366, S.V.388, S.V.407, A.IV.406, A.V.183.

[417] P: *pañca bhayāni verāni vūpasantāni honti*. The five sins or five evils refer to the five kinds misconduct a Buddhist should refrain from. The refraining from these five sins has become 'the Buddhist five precepts,' from no killing up to not taking intoxicants.

The English word 'sin' is employed in this study to represent the notion of evil or *pāpa* in the Buddhist sense. Readers are thus asked to understand that it does not refer to 'an offence against God' as in Christian philosophy.

[418] S.II.68-70, S.V.387-389.

[419] This generally refers to the dependent origination (*paticca samuppāda*) and *nibbāna*.

[420] M.I.167.

[421] D.III.227, S.V.347.

Besides, a Stream-attainer is possessed of the noble eightfold path (*ariya aṭṭhaṅgika magga*).[422] Sometimes, he is said also to be endowed with the same ten qualities as those possessed by the learned noble ones or the non-trainees (*asekhadhamma*),[423] but to a lesser extent.[424]

From all the above mentioned Pali passages, we may conclude a number of qualities of a Stream-attainer as follows:[425]

1. being possessed of four activities: a) association with a virtuous one,[426] b) listening to his teaching, c) proper contemplation on the teaching heard, and d) proper practice according to the teaching

2. being possessed of the noble eightfold path, and, to some extent, the qualities of a non-trainee (*asekha-dhamma*)[427]

3. having witnessed (seen, known, attained, penetrated) the truth and having become independent or self-reliant regarding Buddha's *dhamma*

4. being endowed with the four qualities of a Stream-attainer (*sotāpattiyaṅga*), namely; unwavering confidence in the Buddha, *dhamma*, and Sangha; and the perfect virtues beloved of the noble ones (*ariyakanta-sīla*)

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[422] S.V.348. In this passage, the elder Sāriputta gives a reply to the Buddha's questions regarding what is meant by 'stream' (*sota*) and what is meant by 'a Stream-attainer' (*sotāpanna*). His reply, which the Buddha affirms, is that the 'stream' means the noble eightfold path, and that 'a Stream-attainer' is a person who is possessed of the noble eightfold path.

[423] For a list of these ten qualities, see note 407.

[424] S.V.380-385. In this passage, the elder Sāriputta elaborates the four qualities of a Stream-attainer (*sotāpattiyaṅga*) by ten qualities with similar titles to the ten qualities of a learned one (*asekhadhamma*). These ten qualities were present in Anāthapiṇḍika who was, at that moment, a Stream-attainer. The elder's clarification was affirmed by the Buddha.

It is clear from here that a noble disciple, from the state of Stream-attaining on, is possessed of such qualities, to a certain extent. The distinction between an emancipated one (arhat) and a noble disciple of lower states is that the former is possessed of these ten qualities in their fullest degree, while the latter is not. Therefore, wherever the qualities are specified to an emancipated one, a qualitative '*asekha*' is always added to each of them. Cf. M.I.446-447 "*asekhāya sammādiṭṭhiyā samannāgato hoti….asekhena sammāñāṇena … asekhāya sammāvimuttiyā samannāgato hoti*," meaning 'he is endowed with the right view pertaining to the non-trainee, … the right knowledge pertaining to the non-trainee, … the right release pertaining to the non-trainee.'

[425] While it is possible to interpret that each of these sets of qualities is a separate description of a Stream-attainer, i.e., a Stream-attainer may possess *any* of those sets of qualties; it is more probable that these are descriptions of the same person explained in different occasions. In other words, it is more probable that a Stream-attainer possesses *all* of these qualities. These different descriptions may well represent different steps in the process of practice up to the realisation of truth, as will be clearer in the table below.

[426] In the Buddhist scriptures, this expression usually refers to the Buddha or his noble disciples. The four activities are general activities that a Buddhist should perform with regard to the teacher and his teaching.

[427] For a list of these qualities, see note 407.

5. having eradicated the five evils, as well as having penetrated the truth to be realised, namely, the dependent origination (*paṭicca samuppāda*)

The relation between the unshakable confidence of a Buddhist noble and the direct experience or witnessing of the *dhamma*s is important, particularly for the interpretation of the term *dhammakāya* in early Buddhist thought, as will be discussed further in chapter four.

In this part, the study of words related to the rise of the eye of *dhamma* (*dhammacakkhu*) and the qualities of a Stream-attainer has informed us partly in regard to how *dhamma*s can be realised. The following part will continue on the general steps of the process of enlightenment, which may provide some insight for further discussion in chapter 4 regarding *dhammakāya*.

General Successive Steps of the Process of Enlightenment

The generalisation of steps of enlightenment in this section will be performed by means of a comparison of different Pali passages depicting the realising process of the Buddha and of a noble disciple. However, the depiction of the realisation of an arhat shares certain elements with that of the Buddha and that of a Stream-attainer, thus similar steps of realisation. This study will, therefore, compare the explanation of the process of enlightenment of the Buddha and a Stream-attainer, in order to outline a pattern of general steps which cover the realisation of Buddhist noble ones of all levels.

As regards the Buddha's enlightenment, the *Dhammacakkappavattana-sutta* provides a detailed account.[428] Successive steps of the realisation depicted in the *sutta* are as follows:

1. Avoiding the two extremes. [429]

[428] S.V.420-424.

[429] These are 1) unworthy devotion to sense pleasure, and 2) painful and useless self-torment.

2. Attaining the middle path (*majjhimā paṭipadā*), which is described as the 'eye-maker' that 'gives rise to the eye' (*cakkhukaraṇī*), 'knowing-maker' that 'gives rise to the knowing/knowledge' (*ñāṇakaraṇī*),[430] and leads to (*upasama*), higher knowledge (*abhiññā*), enlightenment (*sambodha*), and *nibbāna*.

3. This middle path is identified with the noble eightfold path (*ariya aṭṭhaṅgika magga*), beginning with right view (*sammādiṭṭhi*) and culminating in right concentration (*sammāsamādhi*).

4. The four noble truths (*ariyasacca*) are described in detail.[431] The noble eightfold path is mentioned again as the fourth truth.

5. Three levels (three rounds) of the realisation of four noble truths is described:

   a) The first level is the realisation as to what the four truths are.[432]

   b) The second level is the realisation of the 'tasks' as to what to be done with each truth.[433]

   c) The third level signifies the realisation that each task has been fulfilled.[434]

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[430] Literally, these are to be translated as being 'the eye-maker' and 'the *ñāṇa*-maker.' The word *ñāṇa* could mean either 'knowledge,' 'knowing,' or 'knower' - 'that which is instrumental to knowing.' It is likely that the latter connotation is meant here, as parallel to the 'eye' - that which is instrumental to seeing. Therefore, it could be concluded that the middle way gives rise to 'those which are instrumental to seeing and knowing.'

[431] *Dukkha*, 'suffering' or 'unrest,' is identified with a number of conditions such as birth, aging, death, sorrow, grief, unease, displeasure, tribulation, coming across the detested, departure from the beloved, and so on. In brief, the five aggregates subject to attachment is *dukkha*.

Dukkhasamudaya or the origin of *dukkha* is said to be three kinds of cravings (*taṇhā*) that lead beings back to rebirth.

Dukkhanirodha 'the cessation' is the complete passionless cessation of, the giving up, the forsaking, the release from, the absence of longing for such cravings.

Dukkhanirodhagāminī paṭipadā refers to the course of practice that leads to the cessation of suffering. This is equated with the noble eightfold path.

[432] This level of realisation is entitled *sacca-ñāṇa* 'knowledge of the truth(s)' in the Pali commentaries. See SA.III.297, PsA.III.612. Cf. also F. L. Woodward, *The Book of the Kindred Sayings (Samyutta-Nikaya) or Grouped Suttas*, 1st ed., 5 vols., vol. 5 (Oxford: Pali Text Society Limited, 1979), p.1962.

[433] This level of realisation is entitled *kicca-ñāṇa* 'knowledge of the task(s) to be fulfilled' with regard to each truth. *Dukkha* is to be understood as it is. *Samudaya* 'cause of *dukkha*,' namely cravings, is to be abandoned. *Nirodha* 'cessation of *dukkha*' is to be penetrated. *Magga* 'the way leading to the cessation of *dukkha*' is to be cultivated.

[434] This is called *kata-ñāṇa* 'knowledge of accomplishment with regard to each of the four truths.'

These three levels of the realisation of the four truths constitute totally twelve aspects of realisation; each aspect is described as the successive rise of 'vision, knowledge, wisdom, higher knowledge, and light'[435] in the 'truths that have never been heard before.'[436]

6. The Buddha clarifies that, as far as his 'knowledge and vision' (*ñāṇadassana*)[437] - consisting of three rounds, twelve aspects regarding the real essence of the four truths - was not yet purified, then he would not have been assured of perfect enlightenment. But, as soon as such knowledge and vision was purified, he is thus assured the supreme enlightenment.

7. Knowledge and vision then arose in him, that his release was unshakable and that this was to be his last life. From then on, there will be no further rebirth.

Such a declaration in the *Dhammacakkappavattana-sutta* suggests at least three points: 1) the successive steps of the Buddha's realisation of the four noble truths, 2) the essential factors regarding enlightenment or realisation, and 3) manners in which 'the flow' of experience takes place.

Firstly, with regard to the successive steps of the realisation, it is most likely that, the Buddha realised 'the middle path' first. As this middle path 'gives rise to the eye and knowledge'[438] then there subsequently emerged 'vision (*cakkhu*), knowledge (*ñāṇa*), wisdom (*paññā*), higher knowledge (*vijjā*), and light (*āloka*)' in regard to truths. The details of each truth, as elaborated in no. 4 above, are then comprehended in the first round of realisation. This was done by means of the rise of vision, different levels of knowledge/wisdom, and the

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[435] P: *Cakkhuṃ udapādi*, *ñāṇaṃ udapādi*, *paññā udapādi*, *vijjā udapādi*, *āloko udapādi*.

Three Pali terms signifying knowledge or wisdom come together in the same passage: *ñāṇa*, *paññā*, and *vijjā*. While derived from the same root *ñā*, the senses of knowledge they possess are of different degrees. Following the term *cakkhu* 'eye' or 'vision,' *ñāṇa* signifies knowledge arises from, or together with, vision. With the prefix *pa*- 'thorough,' *paññā* signifies the thorough knowledge or wisdom. With different prefix vi- 'distinct, superior,' *vijjā* signifies higher knowledge.

[436] ... *pubbe ananussutesu dhammesu cakkhum udapādi ñāṇam udapādi paññā udapādi vijjā udapādi āloko udapādi.* S.V.422.

[437] Note that the *sutta* uses the compound term 'knowledge and vision' (*ñāṇadassana*) to summarise the detailed depiction of 'eye, knowledge, wisdom, higher wisdom, and light' (*cakkhum, ñāṇam, paññā, vijjā, āloko*).

[438] P: *cakkhukaraṇī*, *ñāṇakaraṇī*.

light, as summarised in no. 5. It was then followed by the realisation of the second and third rounds - regarding the tasks to be accomplished and their accomplishment. The mention of 'knowledge and vision' (*ñāṇadassana*) which is not yet purified (*na suvisuddha*) and which is already purified (*suvisuddha*), as described in no.6, suggests that probably there were subsequent revisions of these 'twelve aspects in three rounds' of the truth-realisation, during the full process of enlightenment until his 'knowledge and vision' (*ñāṇadassana*) became fully purified.[439] Finally, the perfectly purified 'knowledge and vision' (*ñāṇadassana*) arose that the Buddha was assured of his supreme enlightenment.

While some translators may prefer the translation 'insight' [440] for the Pali '*dassana*,' in the compound '*ñāṇadassana*' in this *sutta*, the Pali term '*cakkhu*' (eye) preceding it suggests that the translation 'vision' should be more correct, as some authors prefer.[441] It could be supposed, then, that the truths are 'mentally visible.'

Secondly, regarding the essential factors or conditions of enlightenment, two factors are most clearly stated: vision and knowledge (*cakkhu, ñāṇaṃ*). Throughout the Pali canon, we find frequently the compound '*ñāṇadassana*' (knowledge and vision) serving as an indication of realisation. The different levels of knowledge or wisdom listed in the *Dhammacakkappavattana-sutta*[442] suggests the deeper, higher, or more refined levels of knowledge/wisdom that arose for the Buddha along with the deepening of the realisation.

In addition to these two frequently stated factors, another factor listed in this *sutta* is 'light' (*āloka*). While this is not included in the popular compound

[439] While this is not clearly stated in this *sutta*, further investigation might bring out some fruitful results. An interesting aspect is its relation with the realisation of different levels of noble paths and fruits (from the path of Stream-attaining to the fruit of emancipation). The mention of revisioning of the dependent origination (*paṭicca-samuppāda*) after the Buddha's enlightenment might help provide a clue in this regard. - This needs to be left for further research.

[440] For example, see Woodward, *The Book of the Kindred Sayings*, vol. 5, op. cit., p.359.

[441] For example, see Peter Harvey, "The Mind-Body Relationship in Pali Buddhism: A Philosophical Investigation," *Asian Philosophy* 3 (1993): 29-41, 30.

[442] These are *ñāṇaṃ*, *paññā*, *vijjā* – tentatively translated in this work as 'knowledge, wisdom, and higher knowledge'

'*ñāṇadassana*,' it is frequently stated along the line of meditative experience and enlightenment.[443] For example, in the *Bhayabherava-sutta*, the Buddha converses with a brahmin regarding his enlightenment. The Buddha mentions the three knowledges (*tisso vijjā*) arose in him during the three watches of the night. With the destruction of ignorance, the higher knowledge (*vijjā*) arose. With the destruction of darkness, the light (*āloko*) arose.[444] The same is stated in other *sutta*s, where the light arises in succession of the higher knowledge (*vijjā*), both in the enlightenment of the Buddha and of his disciples.[445] According to the *Upakkilesa-sutta*, the brightness (*obhāsa*) is an indication of mental concentration (*samādhi*).[446] On the whole, in the context of Pali passages, light (*āloka*) or brightness (*obhāsa*) usually arises as a result of concentrated mind or enlightenment. Therefore, it is an indicator of such attainments.

Thirdly, with respect to manners in which 'the flow' of experience takes place, it seems that the *Dhammacakkappavattana-sutta* does not give the complete details of the process. Nevertheless, part of the full picture may be observed from the *sutta*.

As mentioned earlier, the process depicted in this *sutta* regarding the steps of realisation starts from 'the middle path.' This gives rise to the eye and knowledge; in other words, it causes 'vision' (*cakkhu*) and 'knowledge' (*ñāṇa*) to arise. Then comes the whole process of the realisation of the four truths; each step is equated with the rise of 'vision (eye), different levels of knowledge/wisdom, and light' in 'the truths that have never been heard before' (*ananussutesu dhammesu*). Here, the depiction, that these five factors[447] arose

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[443] The successive rise of 'vision, knowledge, wisdom, higher knowledge, and light' in the 'truths that have never been heard before' is also depicted in the story regarding the enlightenment of Vipassī Buddha. D.II.33

[444] M.I.22-23.

[445] For example, see *Dvedhāvitakka-sutta* [M.I.117], and *Mahāsaccaka-sutta* [M.I.248-249]. For general expression of the attainment of *vijjā* for the Buddha's disciples, see A.I.164-165, 167; A.IV.177-179.

[446] M.III.157-160.

[447] Here, the five factors refer to 'vision (*cakkhu*), knowledge (*ñāṇa*), wisdom (*paññā*), higher knowledge (*vijjā*), and light (*āloka*).'

every time each truth was realised, suggests that the twelve aspects could have arisen and come to completion in succession, and thus constituted the whole process of realisation of the four noble truths.

The context of this Pali passage suggests that the process of truth realisation, following the attainment of the middle path, is the continuous flow of experience of a balanced mind, without the aid of intellect. The mention of the rise of knowledge in succession of vision supports this point; the knowledge follows 'vision,' which indicates a highly concentrated mind, not 'intellection.' Thus, it is most likely that the whole process of realisation of the four noble truths is purely a matter of intuitive insight.

This may raise the question as to what causes the whole process to flow. While the depiction of the process implies a flow of experience arising from the highly concentrated mind, the *sutta* does not inform us obviously of any form of concentration.

The clue to this is provided in the identification of the middle path with the noble eightfold path (step 3), beginning from the 'right view' (*sammādiṭṭhi*) and culminating in 'right concentration' (*sammāsamādhi*).

Prior to that, in step 2 of declaration, the Buddha discovered this middle path with supreme wisdom.[448] As earlier discussed, the function and efficacy of a *dhamma* require practice or attainment/realisation. The same can be said for this middle path. Once it was directly realised or experienced, it functioned efficiently as an 'eye-maker' (*cakkhukaraṇī*) and 'knower-maker' (*ñāṇakaraṇī*). At the instance of the rise of 'eye' and 'knower' - those which are instrumental to seeing and knowing, the Buddha's mind was 'rightly concentrated,' according to the description of the final constituent of the noble eightfold path - the right or perfect concentration (*sammāsamādhi*). This

[448] P. *majjhimā paṭipadā tathāgatena abhisambuddhā.*

supports the above suggestion that the following process was the flow of experience arising from the highly concentrated mind.

Elsewhere, different details are given regarding the early steps of realisation. In the *Mahāsaccaka-sutta*,[449] the Buddha relates to Saccaka the son of the Jain about his practice prior to his enlightenment. After leaving two ascetics, Āḷāra and Uddaka, he practised various kinds of austerity. His practice was of the strongest degree ever practised in those days. Yet, it did not contribute to any excellent knowledge and vision (*ñāṇadassana*). The Buddha, then, on seeking other ways that might be contributive to enlightenment, recollected his experience of the first *jhāna*, incidentally attained when he was very young. The happiness of the person abiding in such a state was devoid of sense-pleasures and unwholesome states of mind. Becoming aware that such an experience is 'correct' and that it cannot be attained easily by a person whose physical body is too weak, he then regained his bodily strength by abandoning the self-torment and taking coarse food. Once the strength was recovered, he attained the first to the fourth *jhāna*s successively. With his mind thus highly concentrated and purified, he directed his mind to the three knowledges (*tisso vijjā*), and attained them one after another. In the first watch of the night, he attained the knowledge of recollection of his former habitations (*pubbenivāsānussati-ñāṇaṃ*) in all modes and details. In the second watch, he attained the clear 'divine-eye' (*dibba-cakkhu*) that helps one to 'comprehend that beings are mean, excellent, fair, foul, in a good bourn, or in a bad bourn according to the consequences of their deeds (*karma*).'[450] This is called 'knowledge of the passing and the rise of beings' (*cutūpapātañāṇa*). Then in the third watch of the same night, he directed his mind to, and attained, the knowledge of destruction of defilements (*āsavakkhayañāṇa*).

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[449] M.I.237-251.

[450] I. B. Horner, *The Middle Length Sayings (Majjhima-Nikaya) V.2* (London: Published for the Pali Text Society by Luzac, 1957), p. 303.

It is, therefore, evident from this *sutta* that the four levels of *jhāna*s are conducive to insight, represented in this *sutta* by the three higher knowledges (*vijjā*). In such a highly concentrated state, the mind is free from intellection. The directing of the mind to any special knowledge is only a command, without discursive mentation. Thus the mind is not obstructed and can reach those special knowledges successively.

While the details of insight described in this *sutta* are different from those depicted in *Dhammacakkappavattana-sutta*, they are in accordance with one another. The first and second knowledges he obtained in the first and second watches of the night roughly correspond to the realisation of the first and second truths, namely, *dukkha* and *dukkhasamudaya*. They are related also to the realisation of dependent origination (*paṭicca-samuppāda*). The last knowledge, regarding the destruction of all cankers, corresponds to the realisation of the third truth, *dukkhanirodha*. The realisation of the fourth truth is mentioned at the outset, in terms of the accomplishment of the noble eightfold path.

Pali passages affirm this point where right concentration (*sammāsamādhi*) is equated with the four levels of *jhāna*.[451] As they are 'right concentration,' the chief constituent of the noble eightfold path, they then conduce to the rise of vision and knowledge, and so the whole ongoing process of the realisation of the four noble truths. As Crangle rightly states:

> In the context of the Noble Path they (*jhānas*) are right or perfect concentration issuing in a contentless mind, i.e. a mind free of cerebration and sense-activity. The mental unification they induce makes them instrumental in the development of full insight.[452]

The history of the Buddha's enlightenment is depicted not only in the *Dhammacakkappavattana-sutta* but also in other *sutta*s. Nevertheless, rather than being contradictory, the narratives recorded in the different *sutta*s appear to be the story of the same experience, recounted in different terms. Hence, a

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[451] For example, see D.II.313, M.III.252.

[452] Crangle, *The Origin and Development of Early Indian Contemplative Practices*, op. cit., p. 201.

comparative study of these different accounts yields a fuller picture regarding general process of the Buddha's enlightenment.

The steps of enlightenment are depicted also in the case of his disciples, either an Arhat (*arahant*) or a Stream-attainer (*sotāpanna*).[453] A comparison of all these helps constuct general steps of the whole process of enlightenment. However, as stated earlier, the depiction of the realisation of an Arhat (*arahant*) shares parts with that of the Buddha and parts with that of a Stream-attainer (*sotāpanna*). Therefore, this study compares different depictions of realising process of the Buddha and of a Stream-attainer to outline a pattern of general steps of enlightenment,[454] as in the following table.

Table 1: General Steps of Realisation and Transformation

The Buddha's enlightenment		**A Stream-attainer's enlightenment**		**General steps of the whole process**
Dhammacakka-ppavattana-sutta[455]	*Mahāsaccaka-sutta*[456]	*Ambaṭṭha-sutta*[457]	*Sotāpattiyaṅga* (qualities of a Stream-attainer)	
Avoiding the two extremes: 1) indulgence in sensual pleasure. 2) self-torment	Abandonment of the two extremes: 1) indulgence in sensual pleasure. 2) self-torment	Listening to the preliminary teaching (*anupubbīkathā*) - generosity (*dāna*) - virtue (*sīla*) - heavens (*sagga*) - disadvantages of sensual pleasure	- association with a virtuous one - listening to his teaching - contemplating properly on the teaching heard - proper practice	1. Learning & practice according to the teaching

[453] For example, see M.II.38-39.

[454] Even though some lists of the enlightening process of an Arhat include also some additional elements such as the supranatural performance (*iddhi*), those elements can be regarded as additional tasks to elevate practitioner's level of concentration which, if not clung to, will be supportive in their final emancipation. Thus, these additional steps may be included into the same class as that of concentration. Crangle lists all these additional steps in his work and comments that they seem to be "optional, rather than essential." Ibid., p. 150-151.

[455] S.V.420-424.

[456] M.I.237-251. The process of realisation of an *arahant* follows this pattern closely; the small difference being that the first step of an *arahant*'s enlightenment refers to the learning and practice rather than avoidance of the two extremes. See, for example, M.II.38-39.

[457] D.I.109-110. Note that the *sutta* employed is not meant to be a perfect representative of the whole. It is only meant to be an example of the depiction of primary enlightenment of a Stream-attainer.

		(*kāmādīnava*) - advantages of renunciation (*nekkhammānisaṃsa*)	according to the teaching[458]	
- Attainment of the middle path, i.e., the noble eightfold path - The rise of eye (the seer) and the knower (instrumental qualities).	- Attainment of the four *jhāna*s. -highly concentrated and purified mind	The mind has been initially purified. - healthy-minded (*kalla-citta*) - soft-minded (*mudu-citta*) - free from mental obstruction (*vinīvaraṇa-citta*) - bright&clear minded (*pasanna-citta*)	Being possessed of the noble eightfold path[459]	2. Acquisition of realising instrument.
	Directing the mind to the three knowledges.	Hearing the sermon about, following the lead to, the realisation of the four noble truth.		3. Realisation
- Seeing, knowing, penetrating the four noble truth (12 steps in 3 rounds) & dependent origination - Successive purification of knowledge in the four truths until the	1. Obtaining the first knowledge (*pubbenivāsa-ñāṇa* = knowledge and ability to recollect own's previous births and partial destruction of ignorance. 2. Obtaining the	- Pure and clear eye of *dhamma* (*dhamma-cakkhu*) arose that whatever whose nature is to arise, are those whose nature is to cease. - Having seen, attained, known, penetrated the	- Having seen and penetrated well (*sudiṭṭha*, *suppaṭividdha*), with wisdom, the truth of dependent causation, both in obverse and reverse order.[460]	

[458] D.III.227, S.V.347.

[459] S.V.348. In this passage, the venerable Sāriputta gives a reply to the Buddha's questions regarding what is meant by 'stream' (*sota*) and what is meant by 'a Stream-attainer' (*sotāpanna*). His reply, which is affirmed by the Buddha, is that the 'stream' means the noble eightfold path, and that 'a Stream-attainer' is a person who is possessed of the noble eightfold path.

[460] S.II.68-70, S.V.387-389.

attainment of the perfectly purified knowledge.	second knowledge (*cutūpapātañāṇa* = knowledge and ability to recollect the passing and the rise of beings according to their deeds and results) and partial destruction of ignorance. 3) Obtaining the third knowledge (*āsava-kkhaya-ñāṇa* = knowledge and ability to destroy all cankers.) and perfect destruction of ignorance. Perfect realisation of the four truths.	*dhamma*s.		
		- Having crossed beyond doubt, and having deprived of uncertainty.[461] - Having obtained confidence in the master's teaching, without having been to rely on others	- Becoming independent or self-reliant regarding Buddha's *dhamma*. - Being endowed with four qualities of a Stream-attainer, namely, unwavering faith in the Buddha, *dhamma*, and Sangha; and the perfect virtues beloved of the noble ones (*ariyakanta-sīla*).[462] - Having quitted of the five evils conducive to suffering.[463] - Perfect closure of the way to the unfortunate realms[464]	4. Transformation
- Knowledge and	Knowledge of			5. Knowledge

[461] According to Buddhist philosophy, a stream attainer (*sotāpanna*) has uprooted three fetters: 1) the attachment that the assemblage of the five aggregates subject to clinging (*pañca-upādāna-khandha*) is 'myself' (*sakkāyadiṭṭhi*), 2) the doubt regarding truth or realities (*vicikicchā*), 3) the practice of discipline or ceremonial observances without right understanding, that could lead to strong attachment (*sīlabbataparāmāsa*). This is elaborated in detail in the *Mahāniddesa*. Nd1.27, 141, 507.

[462] D.II.93-94.

[463] S.II.68-70, S.V.387-389.

[464] D.II.93-94. Such a description of characteristics of a Stream-attainer are stated in many places of the Pali canon.

vision of one's own release and no further rebirth - Knowledge of one's own perfect Buddhahood.	one's own final release with no more rebirth.			of one's own release (*vimutti-ñāṇadassana*) & Proclamation
Proclamation of one's own perfect buddhahood (*sammā-sambodhi*).			Proclamation of one's own Stream-attaining state (*sotāpatti*) and the destruction of all unfortunate states.	

The above table compares the depiction of the ongoing process of enlightenment as depicted in case of the Buddha (column 1 and 2) and a Stream-attainer (column 3 and 4). The fourth column, rather than being a depiction in a particular *sutta*, is a general portrayal of the qualities of a Stream-attainer (*sotāpattiyaṅga*), as depicted earlier, which accommodate the whole process.

From the above, the pathway to the enlightenment of the Buddha and his disciples start from different points. The Buddha does not rely on anyone's 'teaching.' He himself abandons the two extremes and thus achieves the middle path which is instrumental to the enlightenment. A noble disciple, however, starts his spiritual path right from the Buddha's teaching, either by listening directly to his sermon[465] or by learning the doctrine and practising according to it. In either case, the purpose of the listening and practice, at least, is to acquire

[465] The contents of the sermon or teaching can vary, according to the audience. The main point is only that such a teaching being delivered should work effectively in purifying the audience's mind.

a quality which is instrumental to the realisation. The quality required is the purified, concentrated mind - the accomplishment of 'right concentration.'[466]

Once the 'realising instrument' is acquired, the realisation commences. In case of the Buddha, he directs his mind to the acquisition of the three knowledges (*ti-vijjā*). The same is described elsewhere in case of his disciples who has acquired that instrumental quality by means of meditation.[467] For his disciple who has achieved that state through the Buddha's direct preaching, the continuing teaching effectively directs his mind to the realisation of the truths. In other words, the Buddha's teaching 'leads' the 'healthy mind' of the audience to the realisation of truths. As depicted frequently, when the Buddha sees and knows the balanced and pure mind-state of his audience, he would deliver the teaching which is in a deeper level, i.e., the four noble truths. The audience's mind, which is 'healthy, soft, workable, bright and clear, and free from obstruction,' would then easily realise the truth delivered.[468]

At the time when the realisation takes place, some defilements (*āsava*, *kilesa*) are eliminated, thus there is a release (*vimutti*). Therefore, the result of the realisation of truths is personal transformation. What follows is the 'knowing and seeing' of one's own release (*vimutti-ñāṇadassana*), so that the person can rightly declare his own release at a certain level.

Hence, the general process of enlightenment for a noble disciple can be arranged into these five successive steps:

1. The learning and practice according to the teaching.
2. The acquisition of realising tools.
3. The realisation of truths.

[466] This quality can be represented either by the 'four *jhāna*s' or by 'the noble eightfold path' where its final constituent (right concentration) takes priority.

[467] D.I.71-84.

[468] Here, the depiction of the manner in which *dhamma*s are realised is significant. The practitioner witnesses, i.e., sees, knows, and penetrates the *dhamma*s, as discussed earlier.

4. The transformation.

5. The proclamation of one's own release.

These represent general steps of the whole process of either perfect or partial enlightenment.[469] The understanding of this process will contribute to a better understanding either of the interpretation of *dhammakāya* in chapter 4 and of the relationship between the Buddha and the *dhamma*, as will be discussed in the following section.

The Buddha and the *Dhamma*

As mentioned in the statement of the research question, most previous scholarly interpretations of *dhammakāya* in early Buddhism have been made according to three Pali references in which the Buddha seems to equate himself with *dhamma*. Among the three, only one actually contains the term *dhammakāya*, and thus will be treated in this work as reference to the term *dhammakāya* and discussed in the next chapter. The other two concern the term *dhamma* and will be discussed here. These are one passage in the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* and another in the *Saṃyutta-nikāya*.

Teachings and the Teacher

In the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta*, the passage in question indicates a relationship between the Buddha and *dhamma*. Herein, just before his passing, the Buddha delivers a sermon to the venerable Ānanda as follows

> Yo vo Ānanda mayā Dhammo ca Vinayo ca desito paññatto, so vo mam' accayena Satthā.
>
> D.II.154.
>
> Ānanda, which *dhamma* I've demonstrated to you, and which discipline I've laid down for you. That will be your teacher, after my passing.

Here, the meaning of *dhamma* as 'teaching' seems to be most appropriate. The prescribed '*dhamma* and discipline' are given an authority as the future

[469] Partial enlightenment in this case refers to the enlightenment in the level of a Stream-attainer (*sotāpanna*).

'teacher' after the Buddha's demise. The 'words of the teacher' has taken the teacher's role after he departed.

This passage is cited frequently in scholarly references to *dhammakāya*. Reed rightly points out that the main point of this passage is to equate 'the role' of the teaching with that of the Buddha, as being a 'teacher.'[470] Harrison takes this to be an 'equation' between the Buddha and the *dhamma*. He claims that this passage reflects the idea of *dhammakāya* found in the *Aggañña-sutta*.[471] Xing, likewise, refers to this as a reference to the term *dhammakāya* in early Buddhism.[472] However, as the term *dhammakāya* is not found in this passage, our present study finds it more comfortable to take the passage to be a reference to the term *dhamma*, rather than *dhammakāya*.

In any case, the meaning of *dhamma* in the passage as the Buddha's verbal teaching is clear, even though it is possible to interpret this further in a deeper sense.[473] This work agrees also with Reed's claim that the passage equates the *role* of the teaching with that of the Buddha, as 'teacher,' 'guide,' or 'instructor.' However, the claim of a definite equation between the *Buddha* and his *teaching* may need to be re-considered, for the Buddha does not mean only a 'teacher' but also a perfect self-enlightened Arhat who is endowed with specific qualities. This point may be clearer in the light of discussion in the next section regarding 'seeing the *dhamma* and seeing the Buddha.'

In any case, as the role of an 'instructor' or 'guide' implies, the imperative sense of the *dhamma* in the passage cannot be ignored. For the 'guide' cannot be regarded as such unless the person being guided follows the way it points to. Besides, as the only legacy the Buddha left behind, the teaching has been regarded as Buddhist's 'refuge.' As discussed earlier regarding teaching in the

[470] Reed, op. cit., p. 29.

[471] Harrison, op. cit., p. 50.

[472] Xing, op. cit., p. 69.

[473] As Falk writes, "The *dharma* as Doctrine instituting the "way" of salvation is in its actualization the "way" itself." Falk, *Nāma-Rūpa and Dharma-Rūpa*, op. cit., p. 92.

sense of refuge, the teaching needs to be 'internalised,' or 'practised,' at least. This requires no repetition.

The following section will examine closely the famous statement 'He who sees *dhamma* sees the Buddha (and *vice versa*),' as an important part of our interpretation of the early Buddhist *dhammakāya*.

Seeing *Dhamma* and Seeing the Buddha

A popular passage in the *Khandha-saṃyutta* of the *Saṃyutta-nikāya* is cited frequently in previous works as a reference to *dhammakāya* in early Buddhist thought. Here, the Buddha delivers a discourse to the elder Vakkali:

> alaṃ Vakkali kiṃ te iminā pūtikāyena diṭṭhena. yo kho Vakkali dhammam passati so mam passati. yo maṃ passati so dhammam passati. dhammaṃ hi Vakkali passanto maṃ passati maṃ passanto dhammaṃ passati.
>
> S.III.120.
>
> Enough, Vakkali. What's the point for you with this corruptible body you've seen? Vakkali, he who sees *dhamma* sees me; he who sees me sees *dhamma*. Because, Vakkali, seeing *dhamma* he sees me; seeing me he sees *dhamma*.

This passage is usually taken to be an equation or identification of the Buddha with the *dhamma*, where the latter is interpreted frequently as 'his teaching.'[474]

The passage quoted above has at least three implications. Firstly, the passage implies a relationship between the Buddha and *dhamma* in one way or another. Secondly, the meaning of 'me' as the object of 'seeing' in the sentence cannot refer to the Buddha's physical appearance which he refuses from the outset. It should refer to his 'true nature' or his 'essence' which must be of an opposite nature to the corruptible physical body. In other words, it must be incorruptible. This suggests a supramundane (*lokuttara*) level of 'his essence,' for the mundane (*lokiya*) is conditioned and thus corruptible. Thirdly, as both words '*dhamma*' and 'me' (the true nature of the Buddha) are objects of 'seeing' in the passage, their accessibility to Buddhist disciples is implied. In other words,

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[474] For example, see Gombrich, "The Buddha's Book of Genesis," op. cit., p. 165; Xing, op. cit., p. 72; Harrison, op. cit., p. 50, cf. p. 54.

they are not exclusive to the Buddha. His disciples can also 'see,' or 'realise,' both '*dhamma*' and '(the essence of) the Buddha.'

As to the meaning of '*dhamma*' in the passage, scholars tend to interpret it as 'teaching.' The present study will take this as a starting point, in order to evaluate such an interpretation. Following this line, we may rephrase the sentences as 'he who sees the teaching sees the essence of the Buddha' and *vice versa*. This raises a question as to how the 'teaching' can be 'seen' properly.[475]

A clue is provided in the 'book of the five,' *Aṅguttara-nikāya*.[476] Here, the Buddha was asked how one could be said to live by the *dhamma* (*dhammavihārī*). In his reply, he proclaims five categories of disciples. These are as follows:

1) A monk who learns and masters Buddhist teachings (scripture), spending the whole day to master the teaching, without an attempt to seclude himself for the sake of inner calmness of the mind. He is, thus, called 'a monk who is of much learning' (*pariyatta-bahulo*), but not a 'monk who is living by the *dhamma*' (*dhammavihārī*).
2) A monk who preaches to others in detail the teaching that he has learnt and mastered, spending the whole day for such a proclamation of the teaching, without an attempt to seclude himself for the sake of inner calmness of the mind. He is, thus, called a 'monk who is of much proclamation' (*paññatti-bahulo*), but not a 'monk who is living by *dhamma*.'
3) A monk who performs detailed recitation of the teaching that he has learnt and mastered, spending the whole day for such a recitation of the teaching, without an attempt to seclude himself for the sake of inner calmness of the mind. He is, thus, called 'a monk who is of much

[475] Certainly, this does not mean a mere intellectual understanding, for such on its own cannot lead the person to 'see' the essence of the Buddha.

[476] A.III.86-87.

recitation' (*sajjhāya-bahulo*), but not a 'monk who is living by *dhamma*.'

4) A monk who considers carefully, ponders over, and reflects on the teaching that he has learnt and mastered, spending the whole day for such a reflection on the teaching, without an attempt to seclude himself for the sake of inner calmness of the mind. He is, thus, called 'a monk who is of much reflection (thought)' (*vitakka-bahulo*), but not a 'monk who is living by *dhamma*.'

5) A monk who learns and masters the Buddhist teachings (scripture), does not spend his day attempting to master the teaching, but attempts to seclude himself for the sake of inner calmness of the mind. He is, thus, called 'a monk who is living by the *dhamma*' (*dhammavihārī*).

Only the last category of disciple is worthy of the Buddha's praise. The Buddha then recommends that the monk meditate and be not slothful, so that he will not reproach himself afterward. It is clear from this passage that the essence of the teaching is not that of learning for intellectual comprehension. One needs to meditate to gain higher knowledge.

Elsewhere, in the same book,[477] the same question was put to the Buddha, and a similar reply was given, with the same five categories proclaimed. The only difference from the above passage is that, instead of the emphasis on 'attempt to seclude oneself for the sake of inner calmness of the mind,' this latter passage emphasises the disciple's 'knowledge of the 'true benefit' (*attha*) through his insight.' At the end of the *sutta*, the same command is delivered, that the monk meditate and be not slothful, so that he will not reproach himself afterward. This supports the above passage where the essence of the teaching is acquired through meditation and the insight arisen therein. As Eliade observes:

> For him (the Buddha), knowledge was of little value so long as it was not "realized" in personal experience of it. As for meditational experience, it is the "truths" discovered

[477] A.III.88-89.

> by the Buddha that validated it…. All the truths revealed by the Buddha must be tested in the yogic fashion - that is, must be meditated and experienced.[478]

Recalling the earlier discussion made regarding the efficacy of the *dhamma* as 'teaching,' in this chapter, we observe that the true benefit of the recitation, listening, or contemplating the doctrine as well-learned and memorised, is to lead, through joy and delight, to the 'concentration of the mind' that 'in turn, engenders insight and finally leads to the destruction of all fetters.

Thus, from whatever routes, we come now to the same point where all roads meet - the middle path or the noble eightfold path (*ariya aṭṭhaṅgika magga*). Among the eight constituents of the middle path, the first seven elements, from right view (*sammādiṭṭhi*) to right mindfulness (*sammāsati*), are said in the Pali canon to be accessories of the eighth - right concentration (*sammāsamādhi*).[479] The eighth element, aided by those seven elements, gives rise to the eye (*cakkhukaraṇī*) and the knower (*ñāṇakaraṇī*) - the insight. As already discussed, this finally leads to the 'realisation of realities' and 'transformation of qualities.'

It is only at this point, where the realisation of the truths (realities) takes place, that *dhamma* can be 'seen' and then the practitioner could 'see' the essence of the Buddha.[480] Therefore, if the translation 'teaching' will be employed for '*dhamma*' in the passage in question, it must be only the word 'teaching' which is used in the broader context of 'what the Buddha teaches about' that covers also the meaning of 'realities.' However, it would be more appropriate or more easily understandable if this is translated directly that the *dhamma* in question means 'truths' or 'realities' which the Buddha has realised, or which his disciples must realise.[481] Thus, 'He who sees the reality sees (the essence of)

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[478] Eliade, op. cit., p. 175.

[479] D.II.216-7, D.III.252, A.IV.40.

[480] This work will continue discussing the phrase 'seeing the essence of the Buddha' below.

[481] Even though the word 'teaching' can convey a broader sense that subsumes also the meaning of *dhamma* as 'truth,' it is used more in the sense of 'text' or 'scripture.' Thus, to maintain the interpretation of *dhamma* as 'teaching' in this passage is to risk further misinterpretation as to equate the Buddha's essence with the 'text' or scripture.

the Buddha; he who sees (the essence of) the Buddha sees the reality.' Interpreting in this manner, the context of the passage becomes clearer, although the mention of 'the essence of the Buddha' still requires further clarification, as will be performed in the following.

Seeing the Essence of the Buddha

As to the question of what is meant by the 'essence' or 'true nature' of the Buddha, his designations listed in the *Aggañña-sutta* provide us with a clue. The Buddha refers to himself either as *dhammakāya*, *brahmakāya*, *dhammabhūta*, or *brahmabhūta*.

The title *dhammabhūta*, meaning 'he who has become *dhamma*' or 'whose being is *dhamma*,' suggests that the essence of the Buddha is '*dhamma*.' But, again, further clarification is required as to which notion of *dhamma* is meant here.

The past participle *bhūta* 'has become' indicates that, previously, he was not *dhamma*-being, but that he became *dhamma* later. It is most likely that 'later' in this case means at the time of his enlightenment, when he could call himself 'Buddha' or '*Tathāgata*.' This, again, implies *dhamma* at the level of enlightenment. Such correspondence reinforces the identification of the '*dhamma* to be seen' with the 'essence of the Buddha.'

Earlier, our study has drawn a number of implications from the Pali passage in question. One of them is that, the Buddha's true nature, or his essence, should be incorruptible. Another point is that such 'essence of the Buddha' is accessible also to his disciples, for they can 'see' or 'realise' it. In other words, such essence is 'not exclusive' to the Buddha.

Broadly, this may refer either to 'truth realised' or 'quality acquired' at the stage of enlightenment. However, as the meaning of 'essence of the Buddha' suggests, it should also be 'quality the Buddha has acquired' rather than simply

'truth he has realised.' Otherwise, it would not have represented the Buddha in the phrase 'he who sees *me*.…' It is thus most likely that such 'essence' refers to 'attribute(s) the Buddha attained or acquired' at the point of his enlightenment**,** that have become the Buddha's common quality(ies) or property(ies) and which is accessible or visible also to his noble disciples. To specify, this *dhamma* may be sought among the 'truths' or 'realities' realised in the process of enlightenment.

Earlier in this chapter, under the meaning of *dhamma* as 'truth' or 'reality,' we listed a number of items as 'truths' or 'realities' realised in the process of realisation: four noble truths, the noble eightfold path, dependent origination, the conditioned and unconditioned *dhamma*s, transcendental *dhamma*s or states (paths and fruits). Among them, the candidates to be excluded are the four noble truths, dependent origination, and conditioned *dhamma*s. The first two excluded items are truths to be realised, but they are unlikely to be qualities of the Buddha. Thus, they cannot represent the Buddha in the phrase 'he who sees *me*....' The last item, the conditioned *dhamma*s, are corruptible. Thus, the candidates left over are the unconditioned *dhamma*(s), and transcendental *dhamma*s. However, as the Buddha has attained the fruit of Arhatship (*arahattaphala*), he has passed beyond the four paths and the first three fruits. Hence, those paths and fruits are unlikely to be his qualities or attributes. It is, therefore, most likely that the Buddha's true nature which is accessible or visible to his noble disciples is the fruit of Arhatship or *nibbāna*, as Harvey suggests.[482]

On the whole, the relationship between the Buddha and the *dhamma* as found in Pali passages may be understood on two levels as follows:

1. The *role* of the Buddha as 'a teacher' can be equated with that of 'his teaching.'

[482] See note 100.

2. The *essence* or *true nature* of the Buddha at the level of realisation can be equated with the 'fruit of emancipation' or '*nibbāna*.'

The Pali passage in the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* represents the first level of relationship, while the Buddha's sermon to the elder Vakkali, as recorded in the *Saṃyutta-nikāya*, represents the latter. This reaffirms our earlier remark that the term *dhamma* in different Pali passages cannot be over-generalised. The complex meanings of *dhamma* in different passages can be better-understood when they are studied individually in their particular context.

The understanding of different levels of relationship between the Buddha and *dhamma* as studied in this section will be helpful for further interpretation of the early Buddhist *dhammakāya* as will be undertaken in chapter 4.

Conclusion

This second chapter has studied many aspects of the term *dhamma*, in order to aid further interpretation of *dhammakāya* in early Buddhist usage, as stated in the academic question.

The chapter started from the etymology and historical background of the term *dhamma*. This term has its origin in Vedic literature but it comes to have complicated and particular meanings in Buddhism, where it possesses a central position. Afterwards, the chapter reveiwed previous attempts to elucidate the meanings of the term and then employed a particular classification of the term's meanings to help explain its different usages in early Buddhism and their relationship. The inter-relation between different meanings, especially between the meanings 'reality' and 'teaching,' was discussed in relation to the process of enlightenment. Afterward, the chapter addressed some significant aspects of *dhamma*, especially in regard to practice and realisation, which were rarely mentioned in the academic arena. It outlined a pattern of general steps of the realising process which will be supportive to further interpretation of the term *dhammakāya* in the fourth chapter. Finally, the chapter determined the

relationship between the Buddha and *dhamma* as usually referred to in previous scholarly works. It argues that there are two different levels of such relationship: the relationship of the Buddha as a teacher and his teaching, and the relationship of the Buddha and unconditioned transcendental *dhamma*s at the level of enlightenment. The work argues that the different meanings of *dhamma*, as well as the different levels of its relationship with the Buddha, cannot be over-generalised, and that they should be studied individually in their particular context in each passage. All these will be useful for further interpretation of the term *dhammakāya* as a whole in chapter 4.

Before proceeding to final discussion regarding *dhammakāya* in early Buddhism, the work will study its second component *kāya* in the next chapter, which will supplement the understanding of the full term *dhammakāya* later.

Chapter 3
KĀYA IN EARLY BUDDHISM

Introduction

This third chapter studies the connotations of the term *kāya* in early Buddhist thought. According to the academic questions addressed in the first chapter, the omission in previous interpretations of the term *dhammakāya* involves partly negligence in regard to the significance of its last component, *kāya*. That is to say, the import of the term *kāya* is either denied from the outset or interpreted as a mere 'collection.' This chapter aims to demonstrate the possibilities of alternative interpretations which may help in the re-evaluation of the term's significance as it constitutes part of the whole compound *dhammakāya* in early Buddhist usage.

The chapter will commence from possible translations of the term *kāya* from grammatical aspects. It will then discuss the distinct implications of the two main definitions of *kāya*, namely, 'body' and 'collection.' In turn, these implications will be employed as criteria to determine whether the term *kāya* in each instance should be translated as 'body' or 'collection.' The chapter will then list and provide examples for various aspects of the term. This includes its usage in the senses of collection of beings and non-beings, different aspects of 'physical body,' different levels of 'selves' or 'bodies,' gross and subtle, and of different kinds of beings, according to early Buddhist philosophy. Aspects of *kāya* will be explored either in normal or in particular situations such as in meditation, supranatural power, and in relation to a particular kind of Buddhist noble entitled '*kāyasakkhī*,' meaning 'the bodily witness.' This will provide an overall picture of the term's usage in early Buddhist texts. While the discussion in this chapter will be mostly open-ended, it will establish a criterion for further justification of the import and appropriate interpretations of the term *kāya* in

the specific compound *dhammakāya*, as will be performed in the fourth chapter.

First of all, the study will now explore possible meanings of the term *kāya* and the relevant implications.

Possible Meanings of *Kāya* and their Implications

The Pali or Sanskrit term *kāya* is usually translated into English as 'body,' and is said to be used in various senses, similar to the use of the English noun 'body.'[483] According to the PTSD, the term *kāya* is derived from the root '*ci*' in the sense of accumulation, collection, gathering, or heaping up. It thus assumes the meanings of group, heap, collection, aggregate, assembly, totality, and body.[484] Sanskrit dictionaries define it as body, the trunk of a tree, the body of a lute, assemblage, collection, multitude, principal, capital, a house or habitation, a butt or mark, any object to be attained, and natural temperament.[485] The Pali *Abhidhānappadīpikā*[486] provides two main definitions of the word *kāya*: 'body' (*deha*) and 'collection' (*rāsi*).[487]

Scholars deal with these definitions in different ways. Rhys Davids and Stede (PTSD), for example, emphasising on its direct derivation from the assumed

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[483] Harrison, op. cit., p. 56.

In English, the word 'body' generally refers to the whole physical structure of a human or animal. However, it can denote also the trunk or main part of a structure, or the physique as opposed to the spirit. It can be an informal referral to an individual human being; can signify a group or gathering of people, a distinct mass or quantity of an uncountable noun such as water, land, evidence, or information, or the full or strong qualities of a product, especially of an alcoholic beverage. Albert Sydney Hornby, Sally Wehmeier, and Michael Ashby, *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*, 6th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 134-136. *Collins English Dictionary & Thesaurus*, (Glasgow: HarperCollins, 1993), p. 121.

[484] Davids and Stede, op. cit., pp. 35-37; Monier Monier-Williams, *Sanskrit--English Dictionary: Etymologically and Philologically Arranged with Special Reference to Cognate Indo-European Languages*, New ed. (1899), p. 274.

[485] Monier-Williams, op. cit., p. 274, Vaman Shivaram Apte and Irwin Shapiro. 1975. "The Practical Sanskrit-English Dictionary." Last Updated 30/03/06. http://aa2411s.aa.tufs.ac.jp/~tjun/sktdic/ Date of access: 30/07/07.

[486] *Abhidhānappadīpikā* is a Pali grammatical treatise wherein various synonymous Pali names and nouns are grouped together.

[487] Abhdhp.1084 "*kāyo tu deharāsisu*" = the term *kāya* comes in the meanings 'body' (*deha*) and 'heap, collection, accumulation' (*rāsi*).

Abhdhp.151. "*sarīraṃ vapu gattaṃ cāttabhāvo bondi viggaho dehaṃ vā purise kāyo thiyaṃ tanu kalebaraṃ*." Listed here are synonymous Pali nouns meaning 'body.' Thus the term *kāya* in this instance expresses the meaning of 'body.'

Abhdhp.630. "*kāyo khandho samudayo ghaṭā samiti saṃhatī rāsi puñjo samavāyo pūgo jātaṃ kadambakaṃ*." Listed in this sentence are synonymous Pali terms meaning 'heap,' 'group,' 'accumulation,' 'collection.' Thus, the term *kāya* here is used in the sense of 'collection.'

root '*ci*' in the sense of collecting, identify the meanings 'collection' and 'mass' as the word's 'literal meanings,' and classify other meanings including 'body' as its 'applied meanings.'[488] In contrast, Cone's approach seems to focus more on the term's popular usage rather than on its grammatical formation. Separating the meaning 'body' as a particular usage, she classes all Pali usages of the word *kāya* into three groups, providing the senses of 'body,' 'the main part,' and 'a collection' respectively.[489] While the PTSD's analytical categorisation as 'literal' and 'applied' meanings is broader and thus covers all possible usages of the term *kāya* in the canon, it appears that Cone's classification better reflects the term's popular usage in the Pali texts.

While both styles of classifications presented above can be perfectly effective according to their different approaches, the form appropriate to the present study seems to be a kind of mixture between them. Among those definitions, the divergence of scholarly interpretations of the term *kāya* in the compound *dhammakāya* concerns its two principal meanings: 'collection,' and 'body.' Other usages of the term may be grouped with either of them with flexibility. Indeed, there are also some connotations of the term which are of totally different nature, such as 'main part' or 'principal part.' Besides, some usages appear ambiguous and are not easy to be placed into any particular group with certainty, unless with the aid of traditional exegeses.

Even though the English translations of *kāya* as 'body' and 'collection' have overlapping meanings, and thus sometimes can be used interchangeably,[490] both words have different senses in their main definitions. The word 'body' is found mainly in the sense of 'the entire structure of an organism.' But the word 'collection' merely provides the sense of 'a number of things collected

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[488] Davids and Stede, op. cit., p. 35.

[489] The three groups consist of the following: 1) the body, the physical body, or the assemblage of all five *khandha*s, 2) the main part of the body, the trunk, and 3) a collection, assemblage, group, totality, mass. Margaret Cone and Pali Text Society (London England), *A Dictionary of Pali* (Oxford: Pali Text Society, 2001), pp. 669-672.

[490] For example, see Harrison, op. cit., p. 58. Herein, Harrison concludes the 'Mainstream Buddhist' usages of *dhammakāya* as "the body or collection of qualities, principles, truths, or teachings." [p.58.] It appears that he uses the word 'body' in the same sense of 'collection' in that it consists of several parts.

together.' This suggests both their similarities and differences which may be considered in two aspects: 'structure' and 'function.'

Structurally, both 'body' and 'collection' consist of a number of elements or individual members. A 'body,' as an 'entire structure of an organism,' consists of organs which are entitled in Buddhist terms as 'limbs and parts' (*aṅga-paccaṅga*). A 'collection,' as 'a number of things collected together,' also consists of several things which may be either similar or different. Thus, both 'body' and 'collection' can be reduced to individual members or elements. This may be regarded as their similarity.

Functionally, however, both terms seem to imply different relationship between individual members and the 'totality' of the whole 'body' or 'collection.' As a 'body,' the 'totality' of the whole organism is important for an organ to function. In other words, an organ cannot function once it is cut off from the 'whole.' Likewise, if the sense of 'totality' or 'whole' is lost, in which case the organism is considered 'dead,' all organs cannot function, even though they are still attached to that 'dead body.' Thus, in case of a 'body,' the functional ability of its limbs and parts depends on the sense of 'functioning totality' or the 'living body.' In contrast, the word 'collection' does not imply any sense of such functional dependence. It seems to hold loosely its individual members or 'several things' under the same title of the group. Even though the 'totality' or the 'collection' is not retained, individual members do not lose their identity or function. This is perhaps one of the reasons why the PTSD identifies the definition 'collection' as the 'literal meaning' of the Pali term *kāya*; it conveys only the sense of 'collecting' without any further complex implications. Thus, from the functional aspect, the words 'body' and 'collection' are different.

In the following parts, these distinct implications in the use of *kāya* as 'collection' and 'body' will be clearer as we go through the list and examples of their usages. The list will start from the simpler meaning 'collection,' which is identified in the PTSD as the term's literal meaning, to the more complicated

composition of ‘body.’ The list will include also the employment of the word ‘*kāya*’ in other senses and its ambiguous usages, in order to exhaust all possible connotations of the term in the Pali *sutta*s.

Kāya as Collection

When the term *kāya* is employed in the sense of ‘collection,’ its English translation can be either group, collection, company, assembly, society, or even realm. The term may signify an assembly, company, society, or realm of beings - either earthly or spiritual - or signify an assemblage or collection of non-beings, such as things or elements. Our investigation will start from the term *kāya* used in the sense of a collection of beings.

Collection of Beings

One of the most popular Pali formulae of *kāya* in the sense of company of beings is perhaps ‘*tamhā kāyā cavitvā ...*’ meaning ‘having shifted from that company,’ being an explanation for rebirth, i.e., the shift of a being from one realm to another.

In the *Brahmājāla-sutta*, for example, the Buddha employs this formula to narrate the rebirth of a Brahmā being into the state of a human being:

> Ṭhānaṃ kho pan'etaṃ, bhikkhave, vijjati yaṃ aññataro satto *tamhā kāyā cavitvā* itthattaṃ āgacchati. Itthattaṃ āgato samāno agārasmā anagāriyaṃ pabbajati.
>
> D.I.18.
>
> Bhikkhus, it is possible that a being, *having fallen from that company*, comes to the present state.[491] Having been as present, he goes forth from home to homelessness.

The term *kāya* in this instance is generally translated as ‘world’ or ‘realm.’ It denotes a particular realm of Brahmā deities, thus it is understood in the sense of a collection or assembly of Brahmā beings.

In such a narration about rebirth, the previous state from which the being has moved is sometimes specified. An example is the depiction of Vipassī Bodhisattva's birth, recorded in *Mahāpadāna-sutta*:

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[491] Pali *itthatta*, is literally translated as, ‘state of being thus.’ Here it denotes his coming to be a human being.

> Atha kho bhikkhave Vipassī Bodhisatto *Tusitā kāyā cavitvā* sato sampajāno mātu-kucchiṃ okkami.
>
> D.II.12.
>
> *bhikkhu*s, at that time, the Bodhisattva Vipassī *had shifted from the Tusita company*,[492] being mindful and fully aware, entered the mother's womb.

According to the context, the phrase '*Tusita kāya*' in this instance refers to the company of deities belonging to the heaven of Delight. Thus, it suggests the use of *kāya* in the sense of a collection of spiritual beings in that level of heaven.[493]

In the sense of a company or assembly of beings, the term is found mostly in the form of compounds. Listed below are popular compounds wherein the term *kāya* is used in this sense:

1. *mahājanakāya* = the big assembly of people.

This compound is composed of three elements:

1) *mahant*, meaning 'big,' 'great.'

2) *jana*, meaning 'living creature,' 'a person,' or 'an individual' and

3) *kāya*, meaning 'collection or body.'

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[492] '*Tusita*,' literally translated as 'delighted,' signifies the fourth level of the following six heavens pertaining to sensual pleasure.

In Buddhist philosophy, the six levels of heaven (or we might call them the 'six heavens') pertaining to sensual pleasure (*kāmāvacara*) are: 1) Cātummahārājika - The retinue of the Four Great Deva Kings, 2) Tāvatiṃsa - The realm of Thirty Three gods. 3) Yāma - The heaven of Celestial Joy 4) Tusita - The heaven of Delight 5) Nimmānaratī - The heaven of Creation Enjoyment 6) Paranimmitavasavattī - The heaven of Deities who Depends on Others' Creation. Beyond these six planes are realms of Brahmā deities or the 'Brahmā worlds.' (*Brahmaloka*).

In this work, for the sake of simplicity and brevity, the specific titles of these six realms will be mentioned in their Pali form.

[493] Indeed, in these instances, we can be content with the notion of *kāya* as a collection of beings. However, psychologically, it is possible also that the phrase signifies the shift of a being from one state to another. In other words, the being has shifted from possessing a particular form to another form, as it is evident in the Pali canon that sentient beings belonging to different realms possess different kinds of bodies or forms, while the beings belonging to the same plane possess bodies of similar nature. For example, see *Mahānidāna-sutta* regarding seven sorts of beings, D.II.68.] Hence, the translation of the phrases either as '(The being having shifted) from that body,' or '(The Bodhisattva has shifted) from the body as a Tusita deity' is also acceptable. This will be similar to the depiction '*aññataraṃ manomayaṃ kāyaṃ upapanno*,' meaning 'has been born to some kind of a mind-made body.' (A.III.123.) From this different aspect, the term *kāya* can be used in the sense of body, as distinguished from mind. Thus, the term *kāya* in these instances carries also the sense of 'body.'

Moreover, shifting our focus to the whole being, we could also say that it denotes the change of the whole state of the being, the whole personality, or 'life,' or the five *khandha*s, composed of both mind and body - as it is normally referred to in Buddhist terminology. This notion of *kāya* is seen in the *Ṭīkā* description: *Kāyoti attabhāvo, yo rūpārūpadhammasamūho* = '*kāya* means personality: the assemblage of form and formless elements.' DT.I.243.

Thus, the single term *kāya* in these instances may signify either a collection or company of living beings, a particular form belonging to living beings in a particular realm, or even the whole being (life) of those living beings. Nevertheless, as our focus at this point is on the meaning of *kāya* as a 'collection of beings,' the discussion will still continue on the same plane.

Kāya, in this compound is used in the sense of 'collection.' The prefix *mahant* or *mahā*, meaning 'big,' qualifies the term *kāya* to signify a large assembly. Thus, the whole compound denotes a big assembly of people.

This compound appears only in singular form, as it refers to the whole group, rather than to the many people constituting the group. It is used frequently when a large gathering of people is observed. For example, in the *Mahāvagga* of the *Vinaya-piṭaka*, it is narrated that the Buddha went to see the ascetic Uruvela-Kassapa[494] in his residence, and was allowed to stay in his fire-house, where a powerful *nāga*[495] resided. In order to stay peacefully with such a powerful being, and to tame Kassapa, the Buddha had performed various miracles. Having seen the Buddha's miraculous power, Kassapa thought:

> … sace mahāsamaṇo mahājanakāye iddhipāṭihāriyaṃ karissati, mahāsamaṇassa lābhasakkāro abhivaḍḍhissati, mama lābhasakkāro parihāyissati.
>
> Vin.I.27.
>
> If the great ascetic will perform miracles in the big assembly of people, his gain and honour will increase, but mine will decrease.'

In the *Mahāpadāna-sutta*, the Buddha related the story to bhikkhus of a large number of people who followed Vipassī Bodhisattva when he went forth:

> Atha kho so bhikkhave mahājanakāyo caturāsīti-pāṇa-sahassāni kesa-massuṃ ohāretvā kāsāyāni vatthāni acchādetvā Vipassiṃ Bodhisattaṃ agārasmā anagāriyaṃ pabbajitaṃ anupabbajiṃsu.
>
> D.II.30.
>
> Bhikkhus, at that time, a great assembly of eighty four thousand people, having had shaven their hair and beard, clothed in orange, following the Vipassī Bodhisattva went forth from home to homelessness.

The compound *Mahājanakāya* in these instances signifies a large assembly of people. Sometimes, the term *mahā* and the compound *janakāya* stay separated

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[494] In Pali, a person's name sometimes comes together with the title of his/her residential area. In this case, the term Uruvela-Kassapa denotes an ascetic named 'Kassapa' who was residing in 'Uruvela' district.

[495] The term '*nāga*' refers to a king of serpents, a very poisonous and powerful being who belongs to Catummahārājika - the lowest heaven.

in the same sentence,[496] or only the shorter compound *janakāya* may be used, to signify an assembly of people without specifying its greatness.[497]

The manner of gathering in this compound is spelled out from the component *kāya*, meaning 'collection.' This distinguishes it from the compound *Mahājana*, without *kāya*, which is used merely to refer to a big number of people without stipulating the manner of assembling, or to refer to a large number of people as a whole.[498] Thus, the term *kāya* in this compound has also a specific function, by conveying the sense of 'gathering.'

2. *balakāya* = the assembly of a military force (an army)

Similarly to *mahājanakāya* discussed earlier, the compound *balakāya* is composed of two components: '*bala*' meaning 'power,' and '*kāya*' meaning 'collection.' This compound is found frequently where the movement of a king together with his army is mentioned. An example is Anāthapiṇḍika's question to the rich person of Rājagaha, asking whether he had invited the King Bimbisāra and his army for the next day. The Pali sentence reads:

> kiṃ nu kho te gahapati āvāho vā bhavissati vivāho vā bhavissati mahāyañño vā paccupaṭṭhito rājā vā Māgadho Seniyo Bimbisāro nimantito svātanāya saddhiṃ balakāyena?
>
> Vin.II.155.
>
> Householder, will a marriage occur?[499] Or has a great sacrifice taken place? Or has Bimbisāra the Magadhan king, together with his army, been invited for tomorrow?[500]

The term *kāya* in the compound '*balakāya*,' literally translated in this instance as 'collection of power,' is used in the sense of a collection or assembly of military forces, i.e., the army. It is synonymous to the term *senā* and can be used interchangeably to refer to the army in general. However, where the

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[496] For example, see S.IV.314.

[497] For example, see M.II.5.

[498] The compound *Mahājana* is mostly used in *Jātaka*. For an example of its usage in Vinaya, see Vin I 359

[499] Literally, 'Will the 'taking in' or 'taking out' marriage happen?'

[500] Here, the implication of the question is whether the rich person has invited the king and his army for tomorrow's meal.

components of the army are to be stated, only the term *senā* will be used, qualified by an adjective '*caturaṅginī*,' meaning 'an army composed of four parts.'[501]

Likewise, the four parts (or four processions) of an army are expressed by means of four compounds of *kāya* :

1) *hatthikāya* = group of elephants. Practically, this compound refers to a group of soldiers having elephants as their vehicles.
2) *assakāya* = group of horses. This compound signifies a group of soldiers with horses as their vehicles.
3) *rathakāya* = group of charioted soldiers.
4) *pattikāya* = group of foot soldiers; an infantry.

These four groups of soldiers formed the whole of an army of that time. Again, the component *kāya* provides the sense of collection or gathering.

3. *devakāya* = group or company of deities

The compound *devakāya* is composed of two Pali terms: *deva* 'deities' or 'gods,'[502] and *kāya* 'group' or 'assembly.' Its usage is both similar to and different from the two compounds discussed above. On the one hand, it is similar to them for it provides the sense of a group. On the other hand, it rarely provides the sense of gathering or movement. Mostly, this compound is used in the sense of a 'society' or 'realm,' as in the examples below.

> Ye keci Buddhaṃ saraṇaṃ gatāse, na te gamissanti apāyabhūmiṃ, pahāya mānusaṃ dehaṃ, devakāyaṃ paripuressanti.
>
> S.I.27.
>
> Whoever have gone to the Buddha as refuge, they will not go to the realm of loss. Having left the human body, they will fill up the realm of gods.

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[501] For example of the passage where *balakāya*, *senā*, and *caturaṅginī senā* are used interchangeably, see J.5.319.

[502] The term 'god' here is a general title for god or goddess in Buddhist context. It means spiritual beings in heavenly realm within the cycle of rebirth (*saṃsāra*).

In this example, the term *kāya* siginfies 'a company,' and is distinguished from the term *deha* which refers to 'body.' Here, the compound *devakāya* refers to the company of deities in general. It is synonymous with the phrase *dibba kāya* (divine or celestial company), and opposed to the compound *asurakāya*[503] (company of *Asura*s).[504]

Sometimes, *devakāya* denotes a particular category of deities, as in the following example:

> Mahā-samayo pavanasmiṃ, devakāyā samāgatā
>
> D.II.254.
>
> A large congregation took place in the great forest, groups of deities assembled.

In this instance, the sense of gathering is specified by the verb *samāgatā* 'assembled.' The component *kāya* in *devakāya* provides the sense of a group or category. Here it is used in the plural, signifying many groups (or many categories) of deities.

The usage of *devakāya* in the sense of a particular group of deities is similar to that of the compound *devanikāya*.[505] A clear example of its use in this sense is in the *Mahāsamaya-sutta*.[506] Here, the Buddha said to monks, 'Monks, I will tell you the names of groups of deities.'[507] He, then, spoke the names of individual groups of deities from the plane of earth up to the Brahmā realms. For example, many titles of *Yakṣa* companies, either earth-residing or mountain-residing, either city-residing or forest residing, are mentioned.

4. *Tāvatiṃsakāya*, *Tusitakāya*, etc. = particular companies of deities

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[503] *Dibba kāya* and *Asurakāya* are mostly found in a formula relating the joy of Tāvatiṃsa deities when many people on earth are endowed with moral conducts: '*dibbā vata bho kāyā paripūrissanti parihāyissanti asurakāyā*,' = 'Friends, divine company will be filled up, *Asura* company will decrease. See, for example, D.II.207, A.I.143.

[504] The PTSD defines '*Asura*' as 'Titan,' a fallen angel. It is a general title for a group of beings classified as one of the four unfortunate realms. It is usually used in the sense opposite to *dibba kāya* which is classified as 'happy realm.' For more information on *Asura*, see Davids and Stede, op. cit., p. 89.

[505] For example, in the Saṃyutta-nikāya, the Buddha states that some monks practise the holy life because of their aspiration to a certain category (or group) of deities. Here, the 'group of deities' is addressed by the compound *devanikāya*. S.V.180.

[506] D.II.255-261.

[507] *Ācikkhissāmi bhikkhave devakāyānaṃ nāmāni*.

While the compound *devakāya* is used as a reference to groups of deities in general, some compounds of *kāya* are used to specify the names of particular groups or categories of deities. Two compounds of this type that most frequently appear in the canon are '*Tāvatiṃsakāya*' and '*Tusitakāya*,' denoting groups of deities belonging to the Tāvatiṃsa and Tusita realms respectively.

The compound *Tāvatiṃsakāya* usually appears in the events describing the deities' witnessing of humans' moral actions and their consequences. In the *Gopaka-sutta*, Sakka the king of the Tāvatiṃsa realm informs the Buddha of deities' observation of the increase of divine members and the decrease of *Asura* members, during the time a Buddha is in the human world:

> Ye te bhante devā amhehi paṭhamataram Tāvatiṃsakāyaṃ uppannā, tesam me sammukhā sutaṃ sammukhā paṭiggahītaṃ: 'Yadā Tathāgatā loke uppajjanti arahanto sammāsambuddhā, dibbā kāyā paripūrenti, hāyanti asura-kāyā ti. Tam me idaṃ bhante sakkhi-diṭṭhaṃ yato Tathāgato loke uppanno arahaṃ sammāsambuddho, dibbā kāyā paripūrenti hāyanti asurakāyā ti.
>
> D.II.271.
>
> Lord, I had heard and accepted in the presence of deities who had been reborn to the *Tāvatiṃsa* realm before myself, that; whenever the *Tathāgatas*, the perfectly self-enlightened Arhats, arise in the world, the celestial companies are filled up and the *Asura* companies decrease. Lord, I have witnessed[508] that the divine companies are filled up and the *Asura* companies decrease from the time the *Tathāgata*, the perfectly self-enlightened Arhat, has arisen in the world.

Here, Sakka refers to previous *Tāvatiṃsa* deities who had been reborn to *Tāvatiṃsa-kāya* before himself. *Kāya* in this compound obviously refers to the 'company.' Those previous deities had observed the growth of the celestial population and the decline of the *Asura* population during the age of previous Buddhas. Also Sakka himself witnessed the same tendency during the age of the present historical Buddha.[509] The Tāvatiṃsa deities are famous for their expression of delight on hearing that a large number of people are performing wholesome deeds, and displeasure on hearing the opposite.[510]

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[508] Lit. 'have seen with one's own eyes.'

[509] The increase of divine members and the decrease of *Asura* members result from human virtuous practice. After death, the merit accumulated from such a virtuous practice leads humans to the divine realms, to be members of the heavenly society.

[510] According to the Devadūta-vagga, every fortnight in the assembly of deities at the Sudhamma assembling hall of the Tāvatiṃsa realm, the four Great Deva Kings would inform the Tāvatiṃsa deities how many people are performing

Another compound referring to the Tāvatiṃsa deities is *Tāvatiṃsakāyika*, meaning 'a deity belonging to the Tāvatiṃsa realm.' While the compound *Tāvatiṃsakāya* is used as a noun to refer to the company, the realm, or the category of deities on the second lowest heaven, *Tāvatiṃsakāyika* is an adjective referring to an individual deity residing in that realm.

Less frequently than *Tāvatiṃsakāya* found in the Pali canon is the compound *Tusitakāya*. It usually appears in the depiction of events related to a Bodhisattva and his mother, as illustrated above regarding the phrase '*Tusita kāya*.' Both the compound and the phrase forms are used interchangeably in the same events.[511]

Among deities of lower birth in *Kāmāvacara* realms, Gandharvas or heavenly musicians are mentioned frequently in the canon. These deities are generally called *Gandhabbakāyikā devā* 'deities belonging to the company of Gandharvas.' The word *Gandhabbakāyikā* is a derivative of the compound *Gabdhabbakāya* 'company of Gandharva' where *kāya* conveys the sense of a company. These deities are sometimes entitled *Gandhabba-kāyūpagata* 'those who have come into the company of Gandharva.'

It is mentioned in the *Janavasabha-sutta* and *Mahāgovinda-sutta* that: people who go to the Buddha, the *dhamma*, and the Sangha as their refuge, being endowed with moral conduct in accordance with the Buddhist teachings, will obtain at least rebirth as Gandharvas.[512] People who perform right conduct by means of body, speech, and mind, aspiring toward the Gandharva realm will

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wholesome actions. On hearing of a large number of people doing so, the Tāvatiṃsa deities are delighted that the company of deities will increase and *Asura* companies will decrease. If only small number of people perform good deeds, the deities are dissatisfied accordingly. A.I.143.

Catumahārāja 'the four Great Deva Kings' is the general title of the four kings of the lowest plane among the six heavens pertaining to sensual pleasure. Specifically, the four great kings are Vessavaṇṇa (kuvera), Virūḷhaka, Virūpakkha, and Dhataraṭha. D.II.257.

[511] For example of its usage, see Ud 48. In this instance, the elder Ānanda expresses his wonder that the Bodhisattva's mother was short-lived in the human world and was reborn to the Tusita heaven after seven days of the Bodhisattva's birth.

[512] *Ye hi keci bho Buddhaṃ saraṇaṃ gatā dhammaṃ saraṇaṃ gatā saṃghaṃ saraṇaṃ gatā sīlesu paripūrakārino, te kāyassa bhedā param maraṇā...Ye sabbanihīnaṃ kāyaṃ paripūrenti, te gandhabbakāyaṃ paripūrenti.* D.II.212, D.II.251.

obtain this rebirth.[513] The Gandharvas belong to the realm of Cātummahārājika and are in charge of serving deities in the Tāvatiṃsa heaven.[514] Thus, sometimes the Gandharvas are regarded as '*hīnakāya*' or the 'inferior company.'[515]

The term *hīnakāya* usually refers to an inferior rebirth that is regrettable to people who obtain it.[516] It is generally used where a comparison is made or implied. For example, when a Tāvatiṃsa deity converses with a deity from the Nimmānarati realm, the Tāvatiṃsa deity calls herself hīnakāyūpaga 'one who has obtained inferior rebirth.'[517] But if compared with a Gandharva deity, the Tāvatiṃsa deity is certainly superior and the Gandharva deity will be identified with this term instead.

There are other compounds which utilise *kāya* to refer to companies of deities in the *kāmāvacara* realms. For example, *manāpakāyikā devatā* 'pleasing deities'[518] refers to a group of deities who can alter their body-colour, voice, and comfort, according to their needs.[519] It is said that a housewife who is endowed with good conduct, fulfilling her duty blamelessly according to Buddhist teachings, will be reborn in this company of deities after death.[520]

Satullapakāyikā deva 'the deities who praise righteousness' is the title of a particular group of deities in Tāvatiṃsa heaven. It refers to deities who obtain rebirth in that realm as a result of praising morality or the virtuous men

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513 *... ekacco kāyena sucaritaṃ carati vācāya sucaritam carati manasā sucaritaṃ carati. ... Tassa evaṃ hoti Ahovatāham ... gandhabbakāyikānaṃ devānaṃ sahavyatam upapajjeyyanti. So kāyassa bhedā param maraṇā gandhabbakāyikānaṃ devānam sahavyatam upapajjati*. S.III.250.

514 *Gandhabba-kāyūpagatā bhavanto devānam āgacchatha pāricariyaṃ* . D.II.273.

515 *Hīna-kāyaṃ upapannā bhavanto anānulomā bhavatūpapatti.* D.II.273.

516 *Coditā devadūtehi ye pamajjanti māṇavā. Te dīgharattaṃ socanti hīnakāyūpagā narā*. M.III.187.

517 Vv.48.

518 In Buddhaghoṣa's Pali commentary, this group of deities is identified with the Nimmānarati deities (deities who enjoy creation), as they can create many things according to their need.

519 A.IV.262.

520 A.III.38.

(*sappurisa*). It is evident that deities belonging to this group usually come to praise the Buddha and the various moral conducts of virtuous people.[521]

Valāhakakāyikā devā 'cloud deities' is a general title for five groups of deities who control rain:

1) *Sītavalāhaka deva* 'deities of cold cloud'

2) *Uṇhavalāhaka deva* 'deities of hot cloud'

3) *Abbhavalāhaka deva* 'deities of dark cloud'

4) *Vātavalāhaka deva* 'deities of wind-cloud' and

5) *Vassavalāhaka deva* 'deities of rain-cloud.'[522]

It is said that a person aspiring toward this rebirth, being virtuous physically, verbally, and mentally, regularly offers ten kinds of alms, will obtain this rebirth after death.[523] Here, the word *kāya* refers to the whole company of them.

Finally, *Mārakāyikā devā* or 'deities belonging to the company of Māra' refers to deities who, endowed with wrong view, try in various ways to persuade and encourage people to commit sin.[524] They also try their best to obstruct people from performing good deeds and from religious attainment. It is said that these deities, on knowing of someone's dedicated manner in religious practice, tremble out of fear that he/she will pass beyond their controlling power.[525]

The term *kāya* embedded in these compounds is used in the sense of 'collection' providing the meaning of 'company.'

6. Brahmakāyikā: deities beloning to the Brahmā realms

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[521] For example, see S.I.20, 22, 25, 27.

[522] S.III.254.

[523] S.III.255-257.

[524] For example, see Vin.III.69.

[525] For example, see Ap.28.

Situated higher than the six realms of heaven pertaining to sensual pleasure are the realms of other spiritual beings generally called Brahmā.[526] Sometimes, these beings are identified with the term '*Brahmakāyika*.' While the term *devakāya* represents deities in the broader sense, including *kāmāvacara* and Brahmā deities; *Brahmakāyikā* represents Brahmā deities only.

The term *Brahmakāyika* is a derivative of the compound *Brahmakāya*. It always appears in plural form *Brahmakāyikā*, used as an adjective qualifying *devā* 'deities.' The PTSD translates it as "belonging to the company of Brahmās."[527] Nevertheless, in the Pali canon, the term *Brahmakāyikā* is mostly found to refer to deities in the first *jhāna* level only.[528]

7. *Ābhassarakāya* et al. = particular groups of higher deities

Apart from *Brahmakāyikā* which is used as a reference to Brahmā deities in the first *jhāna* level, other deities in higher *jhāna* levels are called by their specific titles without the term 'Brahmā,' (such as '*Ābhassarakāya*'[529]), a separated

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[526] These realms accomodate deities who were reborn while abiding in *jhāna*s of any levels, either dominated by form (*rūpajhāna*) or formless (*arūpajhāna*).

According to Theravāda Buddhist cosmology, the Brahmā realms corresponding to four levels of *jhāna* dominated by form, are as follows:

1) 1st *jhāna*: Brahmapārisajja, Brahmapurohita, Mahābrahmā.

2) 2nd *jhāna*: Parittābha, Appamāṇābha, Ābhassara.

3) 3rd *jhāna*: Parittasubha, Appamāṇasubha, Subhakiṇha.

4) 4th *jhāna*: Asaññasatta, Vehapphala.

Five particular Brahmā realms of the Non-returners (*anāgāmī*); all correspond to the fourth *jhāna* dominated by form, are Avihā, Atappā, Sudassā, Sudassī, and Akaniṭṭhā.

Four Brahmā realms dominated by formless are *Ākāsānañcāyatana, Viññāṇañcāyatana, Ākiñcaññāyatana,* and *Neva-saññā-nāsaññāyatana*. These also correspond to the fourth *jhāna* level. Vbh.424-425.

The Sarvāstivāda cosmology is slightly different. Therein, the title '*Brahmakāyika*' replaces the title 'Brahmapārisajjā' of the Theravāda. There are either two or three different levels in the first *jhāna* realm; and three levels in the fourth *jhāna* realm. These constitute sixteen or seventeen levels of the four *rūpajhāna* realms. Vasubandhu, Poussin, and Pruden, *Abhidharmakośa Bhāṣyam*, op. cit., p. 366.

[527] Davids and Stede, op. cit., p. 493.

[528] D.II.69. Here, the term *Brahmakāyikā* is qualified by a compound *paṭhamābhinibbattā* meaning 'born of the first *jhāna*.'

In this regard, traditional accounts of the Theravāda and Sarvāstivāda are slightly different. Buddhaghoṣa sometimes uses *Brahmakāyikā* as a general title for all Brahmā beings in the first *jhāna* level [DA.II.510.], while Vasubandhu uses it to refer to the Brahmapārisajjā only. Cf. Vasubandhu, Poussin, and Pruden, *Abhidharmakośa Bhāṣyam*, op. cit., pp. 366, 471.

[529] D.I.17.

phrase comprising *kāya* (such as '*Vehapphala nāma kāya*'[530]), or without *kāya* at all (such as '*Subhakiṇha deva*'[531]).

Of these compounds, the most well known is perhaps *Ābhassarakāya*, usually found in narrative describing the evolution of the world and the rebirth of beings at the beginning stage of evolution:

> Atha aññataro satto āyu-kkhayā vā puñña-kkhayā vā Ābhassarakāyā cavitvā suññaṃ Brahma-vimānaṃ upapajjati.
>
> D.III.28-29
>
> At that time, a being whose life-span or merit has exhausted had moved from the company of the *Ābhassara* deities and was reborn to an empty Brahmā castle.

The term *kāya* in the compound *Ābhassarakāya* in this instance provides the sense of company.

There are even higher deities, belonging to the fourth *jhāna* level, in the realms of the five Suddhāvāsa 'five pure abodes'[532] - the five particular realms for Non-returners (*anāgāmī*). Generally, these deities are referred to as *Suddhāvāsakāyika deva*, 'deities belonging to the company of Suddhāvāsa.'[533] However, where they are mentioned individually, their specific titles do not consist of *kāya*; they normally come along with, and qualify, the term *deva*,[534] forming phrases such as '*Avihā devā*' or '*Atappā devā*.'

Similarly, *jhāna*-abiding beings characterised by formlessness (*arūpa*)[535] are named mostly with compounds which include the term *upaga*, and qualify *deva*. Examples are *Ākāsānañcāyatanūpaga deva*, *viññāṇañcāyatanūpaga*

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530 M.I.329.

531 D.III.253.

532 These five particular realms for the non-returners are Aviha, Atappa, Sudassa, Sudassi, and Akaniṭṭha realms.

533 For example of its usage, see Vin.II.302. Herein, a deity of this category clarifies to a doubting monk regarding the groups of monks that makes right and wrong claim regarding Buddhist teachings. Also at D.II.254-5, four Suddhāvāsa deities are said to come to pay homage to, and praise, the Buddha and the *Saṅgha* in the assembly of various deities who assembled to see the Buddha and five hundreds Arhats.

534 For example of their occurrences, see D.II.52, M.I.289.

535 There is disagreement among early Buddhist schools as to whether these beings possess form (*rūpa*) or (reduced) physical matter. (See Vasubandhu, Poussin, and Pruden, *Abhidharmakośa Bhāṣyam,* op. cit., p. 1221.) In any case, all schools agree that these beings obtain *jhāna*s by the employment of formless meditative **objects.**

deva, *ākiñcaññāyatanūpaga deva*, and *neva-saññā-nāsaññāyatanūpaga deva*.[536]

8. *sattanikāya* = groups of beings

In addition to the compounds stated above which are used to refer to particular beings, a compound which refers to beings in general is *sattanikāya*, meaning 'groups of beings.' This term appears when the suffering (*dukkha*) related to birth, aging, and death is described in detail.[537]

Birth is explained as the process by which a being is reborn to a particular group (*sattanikāya*), including the appearance of the five aggregates (*khandha*), and the obtainment of the sense organs. Aging is identified with the state in which the being becomes decayed, broken-toothed, grey-haired, wrinkle-skinned, as well as with the loss of youth and the ripeness of sense faculties. Death is transmigration, the stage by which the being leaves the category he/she currently belongs to. It involves the breaking up of the body, disappearance, decease, the destruction of life, the breaking up of aggregates, and the abandonment of the physical body.

So far, the chapter has listed most of the cases throughout the Pali canon in which the term *kāya* denotes a 'collection of beings.' In all these cases, it is observed that all members of the group share a particular quality; it is a general identity which is the reason for their belonging to the same group. This quality or identity is of self-origin, i.e., even if there is no 'group' or 'company,' each individual still possesses that quality. For a clearer picture, see the table below.

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[536] M.III.103, A.I.267.

[537] For example, see D.II.305, M.I.49-50, M.III.249, S.II.3-2, S.II.42-44, S.II.57.

Table 2: *Kāya* = group of beings

Comparison of the individual's identity when the group (*kāya*) is and is not retained

Sample	With *kāya*			Without *kāya*		
	Compound	meaning	Members	Remain	Individual	quality
1	*mahājana-kāya*	great assembly of people	persons	*jana*	a person	same identity
2	*ratha-kāya*	group of charioted soldiers	charioted soldiers	*ratha-bala*	a charioted soldier	same duty/ activity
3	*Brahma-kāyika*	deities belonging to the company of Brahmās	Brahmā deities	*Brahma*	a Brahmā deity	same identity
4	*Tusita-kāya*	company of Tusita deities	Tusita deities	*Tusita-deva*	a Tusita deity	same identity

From the table, we see that, in case of *kāya* signifying a collection of beings, even though the group is not retained, the identity of its individual members does not change, and their duties or activities remain. It means that the identity and activities of an individual member is independent of the group, and that the group only holds its members together loosely. In other words, the group functions merely as a label of the general identity of its members and has no influence upon their individual properties or functionality.

Collection of Elements or Substances

Besides signifying a group or company of beings, the term *kāya* in the sense of 'collection' can also signify collection of substance or elements.

For example, in the elder Nandaka's teaching delivered to a group of nuns, human internal and external faculties[538] are compared metaphorically with *maṃsakāya* 'heap of flesh' and *cammakāya* 'collection of skin' respectively.[539]

[538] Internal faculties refer to: 1) *cakkhu* the eyes 2) *sota* the ears 3) *ghāna* the nose or smelling organ 4) *jivhā* the tongue 5) *kāya* the physical body and 6) *mana* the mind. The corresponding external faculties to the internal faculties are: 1) *rūpa* form or visible things 2) *sadda* sound 3) *gandha* odour 4) *rasa* taste 5) *phoṭṭhabba* touchables and 6) *dhamma* mentally perceivable elements.

[539] Nandakovāda-sutta M.III.274-5.

The two groups of sense-faculties are bound together by passionate delight (*nandirāga*), which is compared to muscles and tendons that hold flesh and skin together. The practitioner must cut this binding with higher wisdom (*ariya paññā*), in order to abandon his/her attachment to those objects and to the sensual pleasure associated with them. Here, we note two compounds used in the sense of a collection: '*maṃsakāya*' meaning 'heap of flesh,' and '*cammakāya*' 'piece of hide.'

In an exegetical passage of the *Paṭisambhidāmagga*, groups of physical elements are objects of contemplation when related to impermanence (*aniccatā*), unpleasantness (*dukkhatā*), and the state of being not-Self (*anattatā*) with regard to the body. The groups mentioned include *āpokāya* (mass of the water element), *tejokāya* (mass of the fire element), *vāyokāya* (mass of the wind element), *kesakāya* (heap of hairs), *lomakāya* (heap of body hairs), *chavikāya* (piece of skin), *cammakāya* (piece of hide), *maṃsakāya* (heap of flesh), *rudhirakāya* (mass of blood), *nahārukāya* (collection of tendons), *aṭṭhikāya* (collection of bones) and *aṭṭhimiñjakāya* (collection of bone marrow).[540] Having comprehended that the physical body is nothing but an assemblage of all the masses of substances, the practitioner would be relieved of the strong attachment to the notion of the physical body as self or belonging to self.

In the above instances, each *kāya* denotes a group of the same kind of physical elements. For example, the 'group of fire elements' (*tejokāya*) has fire elements as its members. Without *kāya*, the individual elements are still the same fire elements (*tejodhātu*). This is different from the case of the whole physical body, as will be discussed below.

In non-Buddhist claim, as recorded also in the Pali canon, this notion of *kāya* also prevails. For example, in Pakuddha Kaccāyana's view, seven groups of

[540] Ps.II.232-3.

physical elements and experiences are said to be unmade, permanent, and not subject to variation: *pathavīkāya* (group of earth elements), *āpokāya* (mass of water elements), *tejokāya* (mass of fire elements), *vāyokāya* (mass of wind elements), *sukha* (comfort), *dukkha* (discomfort) and *jīva* (life).[541]

According to another view of Ajita Kesa-kambali: at the breaking up of this physical body, all the groups of physical elements (earth, water, fire, and wind elements) go their ways. There is no continuity and no more birth. Thus, moral or immoral conduct means nothing, as they do not contribute to anything after death. The same holds true for being a fool or a wise person, as these personal labels will merely disappear when the physical body dies.[542] In describing this viewpoint, the same compounds *pathavīkāya*, *āpokāya*, *tejokāya*, *vāyokāya* are employed.

In a similar way to the case of *kāya* signifying a collection of beings, as discussed earlier, *kāya* signifying a collection of substances, works in the same manner. It loosely holds the members together; just as a label attached to its individual members shows that each element belongs to this group. In this case, when the term *kāya* or the title of the 'collection' is removed, the identity of its members does not change; the wind element is still the wind element, with the same properties, even without the label 'mass' (*kāya*) of wind. The same holds true for the rest.

Therefore, it is observed that, in the case of *kāya* used in the sense of 'collection,' either of beings or non-beings, the group merely holds its members together loosely with its 'title,' using their general identity as a label of membership. In other words, the 'group' or 'collection' means a mere 'collective title' of those individual members. Without the group (*kāya*), the identity or function of each individual remains. Individual members are thus 'functionally independent' of the 'group.'

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[541] S.III.211.

[542] D.I.46.

This is different in case of *kāya* signifying 'body,' as will be discussed below.

Kāya as Body

Besides its usage in the sense of 'accumulation' or 'collection,' the term *kāya* is used more frequently and is more complicated in the sense of 'body.' According to Buddhist philosophy, not only humans and animals possess 'bodies,' but also spiritual beings do. This is mentioned in many locations in the Pali canon. For example, in the *Mahānidāna-sutta*,[543] the Buddha acknowledges to the elder Ānanda various beings who possess similar or different kinds of bodies and perceptions. Elsewhere, he converses with Poṭṭhapāda regarding the acquisition of different kinds of 'personality' (*attapaṭilābha*), wherein the term '*atta*-' seems to be used in the sense of '*attabhāva'* or even '*kāya*' (body).[544]

This section deals with this sense of *kāya*; either as 'physical body' or other kinds of body, either 'whole' or 'part' of body, either of a human being or of a spiritual being, and either in normal situation or in specific situation. Among the body of different kinds of beings, our study will start from the use of *kāya* in various senses of the body of a human being.

Bodies of a Human

The term *kāya* signifying a human body can be found either in the sense of 'human physical body,' 'means of physical action,' or of other kinds of bodies of a human in different situations. Our investigation of *kāya* related to the human body will proceed from physical body to various aspects of body in normal situations, commencing with the most popular connotation, i.e., as the human physical body.

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[543] D.II.68-69.

[544] D.I.195.

Physical Body - whole or Part

Throughout the Pali canon, both in the *Vinaya-piṭaka* and the *Sutta-piṭaka*, *kāya* is used mostly in the sense of the physical body. Davids and Stede define it as the 'physical aspect' of *kāya*.[545] It may denote either whole or part of the body.

1. *Kāya* = the whole physical body

In the *Mahāvagga*, the term *kāya* found in the Buddha's biography is used mostly in the sense of the physical body. For example, in the third week after his perfect enlightenment, the Buddha sat cross-legged, meditating at the foot of a Muccalinda tree for seven days. Muccalinda, the king of serpents, encircled the body of the Buddha with his body, with the intention of protecting the Buddha from contact with heat, cold, wind and sunshine, as well as from the bite of insects and reptiles.[546] The term *kāya*, 'body,' mentioned in this passage signifies the Buddha's physical body as a whole.

Also in the *Mahāvagga*, various events regarding the Buddha's *dhamma* propagation and the establishment of the Buddhist community are recorded. The course and development of the discipline and traditions are described. This includes the tradition of looking after the sick within the community.

In the case of illness, the term *kāya* generally stands for the physical body. Sometimes the term is part of a compound. For example, when the elder Sāriputta was very sick, in order to provide him with a suitable therapy, the elder Moggallāna asked him, "*pubbe te āvuso Sāriputta kāyaḍāhābādho kena phāsu hoti*,"[547] meaning 'Sāriputta, how was your strong bodily illness cured previously?' Here, the phrase *kāyaḍāhābādho* signifies a strong sickness of the

[545] Davids and Stede, op. cit., p. 35.

[546] Vin.I.3.

[547] Vin.I.214.

physical body, as distinguished from mental illness, without specifying a particular sick part of the body.

Another example is when the Buddha needed a therapy. The passage runs, "*dosābhisanno kho Ānanda tathāgatassa kāyo, icchati tathāgato virecanaṃ pātun ti*," [548] meaning 'Ānanda, the body of the *Tathāgata* is full of accumulated filth. The *Tathāgata* needs to drink a purgative.' According to the context, the 'body of the *Tathāgata*' denotes the whole physical body of the Buddha. Even though the defect might be understood as present only in the gastro-intestinal system, one which might be cured by a cathartic, it is still more likely that the 'body of the *Tathāgata*' mentioned above signifies the physical body as a whole, for the poisonous substance of the accumulated filth is circulated throughout the whole body.

In some cases, the term *kāya* signifies a specific part of the physical body, mainly the trunk of the body and its limbs and parts.

2. *Kāya* = the trunk of the physical body

In the phrase describing the meditating posture "*nisīdi pallaṃkaṃ ābhuñjitvā ujuṃ kāyaṃ panidhāya parimukhaṃ satiṃ upaṭṭhapetvā*," [549] translated as 'having sat cross-legged, kept the body upright, setting up mindfulness before him,' *kāya* or 'body' here denotes 'the trunk of the physical body.'

And in the disciplinary rules where an accessory is mentioned, the term *kāya* is usually found in a compound such as '*kāyabandhana*,' literally translated as 'body tier,' meaning a waist-band.[550] Here again, the term *kāya* stands for the trunk of the physical body.

3. *Kāya* = parts of the body

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[548] Vin.I.279.

[549] For example, see D.I.71, D.II.291.

[550] For example, see Vin.I.51.

The fortieth rule of *Pacittiya-kaṇḍa* of the *Vinayapiṭaka* states that monks must not bring or eat the food which is 'not given.' Here, the Pali record clarifies in details the definition of 'not-given' and 'given.'

> adinnaṃ nāma apaṭiggahitakaṃ vuccati. dinnaṃ nāma kāyena vā kāyapaṭibaddhena vā nissaggiyena vā dente hatthapāse ṭhito kāyena vā kāyapaṭibaddhena vā paṭigaṇhāti, etaṃ dinnaṃ nāma.
>
> Vin.IV.90.
>
> It is said that 'not-given' means the thing that is not received. 'Given' means when the owner is giving with body, with the thing related to body, or with the thing to be given, the monk having stood within a hand's length distance, receives with body or with something related to body. This is named 'given.'

According to this rule, the term *kāya* could theoretically denote any part of the body used to receive things (formally) from lay supporters. Practically, however, *kāya* in this instance mostly signifies both hands. Receiving things from lay supporters with other parts of the body seems unacceptable.[551]

The compound *kāyapaṭibadda* 'thing related to body,' as mentioned in this rule, generally means something that is being held in hand(s). In terms of the lay supporter who is offering food, the term *kāyapaṭibadda* could mean a ladle or even a dish being offered, while for the monk, the term generally denotes a bowl or even a piece of cloth that the monk is holding in both hands. Therefore, the term *kāya* in this instance does not mean the whole physical body, but only part of the body, according to the context.

In the *Mahāpadāna-sutta*, a number of fortune-telling brahmins explain to the king the 32 marks of the Great man as present in Vipassī Bodhisattva. One of them is described as follows:

> Ayaṃ hi deva kumāro sukhumacchavi sukhumattā chaviyā rajojallaṃ kāye na upalimpati.
>
> D.II.17
>
> King, this boy is fine-skinned. Due to the fineness of the skin, muddy dirt does not taint his body.

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[551] This is perhaps most evident in Theravāda communities. In Thailand, for example, monks will receive alms from lay supporters with a bowl held in both hands. In receiving other sustenance, they will receive things from a male supporter with both hands, but from a female supporter with a piece of cloth held at the end with both hands. The use of a piece of cloth in receiving things from a female supporter aims to prevent direct physical contact. Nevertheless, even with a piece of cloth laid down before them, monks still have to hold an end of the cloth with their hands. Receiving with both hands is regarded as receiving things with respect in the lay supporters' faith and good will. In such a Buddhist community we cannot find a monk receiving things from lay supporters with other parts of his body.

Body or *kāya* in this instance signifies the Bodhisattva's bodily skin.

4. *Kāya* = bodily height

In the *Mahāpadāna-sutta*, the nineteenth of the thirty two characteristics of the Great Man *(Dvattiṃsa mahāpurisalakkhaṇāni*) present in Vipassī Bodhisattva is described:

> yāvatakv assa kāyo tāvatakvassa vyāmo, yāvatakv assa vyāmo tāvatakvassa kāyo
> D.II.18.
> His body is as long as the span of his arms, the span of his arms as long as his body.

Kāya or 'body' in this example represents Vipassī Bodhisattva's height. Regarding this characteristic, the Bodhisattva's height, while standing upright, is equal to the length of the span of his arms, measured from the tip of the left middle finger to the tip of the right middle finger, while stretching both arms to their full length.

4. *Kāyaparihārika* = The robe that maintains the body

In the *Sāmaññaphala-sutta*, the Buddha describes to king Ajātasattu the manner in which a monk is full of contentment. The monk in this discipline is content with the robe that maintains his body, and with the alms that sustain his stomach.[552] Here, the term used to qualify the robe is '*kāyapārihārika*,' meaning 'maintaining the body.'

To understand what the term *kāya* in the compound *kāyapārihārikena* signifies, it is useful to look at the purpose of using a robe.

In the *Sabbāsava-sutta*, the Buddha explains to Bhikkhus how defilements are abandoned by means of using sustenance.[553] A monk in this discipline, having skilfully reflected, uses the robe to fit its purposes. The purposes of robe usage are listed as follows:

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[552] D.I.71.

[553] M.I.10.

1) To protect the body from cold, heat, the bites of gadfly and mosquito, wind, sunlight, and from the touch of reptiles.
2) To cover up parts of the body that, if not concealed, would arouse shame.

In short, the purpose of using the robe is to maintain the well-being of the physical body, and the appropriate physical appearances. Thus, it is likely that the term *kāya* in the compound *kāyaparihārika* signifies ‘physical health’ and ‘physical appearances.’

Body as Means of Action

Whenever the term *kāya* is mentioned along with other terms signifying speech (*vācā* or *vacī-*) and mind (*mana*, *citta*, or *ceta*), it denotes physical mode as distinguished from the other two modes of action. Thus, the PTSD defines it as the ‘ethical aspect’ of the term *kāya*.[554]

In the *Cullavagga* of the Vinaya, six origins of ecclesiastical offence are listed:[555]

1) an offence originated from body, not from speech and mind
2) an offence originated from speech, not from body and mind
3) an offence originated from body and speech, but not from mind
4) an offence originated from body and mind, but not from speech
5) an offence originated from speech and mind, but not from body
6) an offence originated from body, speech, and mind

Herein, the three root-origins of actions, i.e., body, speech, and mind, are differentiated. *Kāya* in this instance denotes the physical body as a whole, without classification of particular parts causing individual offences.

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[554] Davids and Stede, op. cit., p. 36.

[555] *atth'āpatti kāyato samuṭṭhāti na vācato na cittato, atth'āpatti vācato samuṭṭhāti na kāyato na cittato, atth'āpatti kāyato ca vācato ca samuṭṭhāti na cittato, atth'āpatti kāyato ca cittato ca samuṭṭhāti na vācato, atth'āpatti vācato ca cittato ca samuṭṭhāti na kāyato, atth'āpatti kāyato ca vācato ca cittato ca samuṭṭhāti*. Vin.II.90.

Kāya as one of this triad is generally used adverbially to refer to the first among the three ways of actions or deeds. In most occurrences, it appears in its instrumental singular form '*kāyena*,' meaning 'physically' or 'by means of body.' This form usually comes along with, and is distinguished from, *vācāya* and *manasā* or *cetasā*, meaning 'verbally,' and 'mentally,' signifying the two other modes of performance.[556]

For example, In the *Sāmaññaphala-sutta*, the Buddha mentions three kinds of self-restraint:

> So evaṃ pabbajito samāno *kāyena saṃvuto* vihareyya vācāya saṃvuto vihareyya manasā saṃvuto vihareyya
>
> D.I.60.
>
> Having been ordained thus, he *would dwell restrained physically*, he would dwell restrained verbally, he would dwell restrained mentally.

Frequently, the term *kāya* used as one of the triad, is found in a compound such as *kāyakamma* (bodily action). For example, the Buddha once visited three disciples - the elders Anuruddha, Kimbila, and Nandiya, who were staying in the royal eastern park. He asked them whether they got on well together like milk and water, were delighted with each other, were not disputing, and looked at each other with friendly eyes, and how they did so. The monks, one after another, informed the Buddha that it was 'well gained' (*lābhā vata no*) having lived with such fellow monks. Their kindness through physical, verbal, and mental actions was performed toward each other both externally and internally. Here, the Pali passage runs as follows:

> tassa mayhaṃ bhante imesu āyasmantesu *mettaṃ kāyakammaṃ* paccupaṭṭhitaṃ āvi c'eva raho ca, mettaṃ vacīkammaṃ, mettaṃ manokammaṃ paccupaṭṭhitaṃ āvi c'eva raho ca
>
> Vin.I.351.
>
> My Lord, my *physical action of loving kindness* toward these elder ones has been present both outwardly and inwardly. My verbal and mental actions of loving kindness have been present both outwardly and inwardly.

The compound *kāyakammaṃ* signifies bodily action as distinguished from verbal and mental actions.

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[556] For example, see Vin.I.161.

Apart from the compound *kāyakamma* which refers to bodily action in general, other two compounds, i.e., '*kāyaduccarita*' (bodily misconduct) and '*kāyasucarita*' (right bodily conduct) are employed to distinguish wholesome and unwholesome physical deeds. For example, when questioned by Sīha whether the criticism 'the Buddha is the person who burns' is correct, the Buddha replies that it would be correct in the sense that all wicked and sinful conducts are to be burnt.[557] In this reply, the compounds employed for bad conducts performed by means of body, speech, and mind, are *kāyaduccarita*, *vacīduccarita*, and *manoduccarita* respectively.

Likewise, when criticised by the brahmin Verañja for proclaiming 'non-action' (*akiriya*), the Buddha said:

> ahaṃ hi brāhmaṇa akiriyaṃ vadāmi kāyaduccaritassa vacīduccaritassa manoduccaritassa anekavihitānaṃ pāpakānaṃ akusalānaṃ dhammānaṃ akiriyaṃ vadāmi.
>
> Vin.III.2.
>
> Brahmin, I proclaim no performance of bodily misconduct, verbal misconduct, and mental misconduct. I proclaim no performance of various kinds of sinful, unwholesome deeds.

Here again, the same compound *kāyaduccarita* is used to declare that the Buddha proclaims non-action of all misconduct. Indeed, the Buddha gives the reply by altering the term non-action (*akiriya*) from its original sense in the criticism.[558] This kind of the Buddha's reply, without refutation of the criticism, can be found throughout the Pali canon.

In the same passage, having responded to Verañja's criticism in a constructive manner, the Buddha explains his meditative experiences as well as super-natural powers, as part of the path to his perfect enlightenment. As part of his depiction of *dibbacakkhu* the divine eye, he declares its quality of seeing the death and rebirth of beings:

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[557] Vin.I.235.

[558] In fact, in Verañja's criticism, *akiriya-vāda* traditionally means the proclaimation that whatever is done, either wholesome or unwholesome, will not yield any result to the performer in the future. However, the Buddha, instead of refutation of such criticism, adopted it that he is an *akiriya-vada*, while ascribing to it a different meaning as the proclaimer of non-action of unwholesome deeds.

ime vā pana bhonto sattā kāyasucaritena samannāgatā vacīsucaritena samannāgatā manosucaritena samannāgatā ariyānaṃ anupavādakā sammādiṭṭhikā sammādiṭṭhikammasamādānā te kāyassa bhedā paraṃ maraṇā sugatiṃ saggaṃ lokaṃ upapannā'ti

Vin.III.5.

These beings were endowed with bodily right conduct ... verbal right conduct ... mental right conduct, not insulting the noble ones, possessing right views, taking the actions in accordance with the right views. They, after death because of the breaking up of the body, were reborn happy to the heavenly world.

In this passage, the Pali compounds referring to right conduct performed by means of body (*kāyasucarita*), speech (*vacīsucarita*) and mind (*manosucarita*), are listed to convey the message that good deeds carried out through these three ways would contribute to a happy rebirth. Thus, a person who performs wholesome actions by three ways is the 'one who loves oneself;' for he has done for himself what a lover should do for his beloved one.[559]

In addition to the compound mentioned above, sometimes *kāya* signifying bodily action is found also in a derived form (*Taddhita*)[560] *kāyika* (bodily). Theoretically, this term should come along with *vācasika* (verbal) and *cetasika* (mental) constituting three ways of performance. Practically, however, when it is mentioned in the *Vinayapiṭaka* where mainly physical and verbal actions are concerned, we usually find only two of them - *kāyika* and *vācasika* - together, while *cetasika* is usually excluded.[561]

For example, according to the *Bhikkhunī-vibhaṅga* of the Vinaya, it is not appropriate for a Buddhist nun to be associated with male householder(s). The inappropriate association is defined as follows:

saṃsaṭṭhā nāma ananulomikena kāyikavācasikena saṃsaṭṭhā.

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[559] S.I.72. The original metaphor in the Pali is made in plural form. Here, it is adjusted to singular form for the ease of English usage and understanding.

[560] *Taddhita* is a derivative formed by adding a suffix to a noun, in order to add additional meaning to it. In the above mentioned example, *kāyika* is a derivative formed by adding *-ika* to *kāya* 'body,' providing the meaning of 'related to body.' We have come across this form of derivative in *Brahmākāyika* and *Ābhassarakāyika*; the deities belonging to the company of Brahmās and of Ābhassara deities.

[561] Although the intention is necessarily required to judge an action as an offence, as Collins rightly observed [Steven Collins, "The Body in Theravāda Buddhist Monasticism," in *Religion and the Body*, ed. Sarah Coakley, *Cambridge Studies in Religious Traditions; 8*. (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 199.], the monastic disciplines are said to govern mainly the body and speech. Thus we find in the *Vinayapiṭaka* these two terms together, rather than all the three.

Vin.IV.294.

'Associated with' means 'inappropriately associated with (those male householders) by means of bodily and verbal performance.'

Here the derivatives *kāyika* and *vācasika* are put together in the form of the compound *kāyikavācasika*, providing the total meaning of both terms. Likewise, in speaking of self-guarding, sometimes we find only references to physical (*kāyagutta*) and verbal guarding (*vacīgutta*) in conversation, as mental guarding is not visible to an outsider.[562]

Body and Mind

As opposed to the modes of action or deed that are referred to in three ways, in the explanation of experiences, we find only two modes, i.e., bodily and mentally. In such cases, *kāya* usually appears along with *citta* or *mana*, where the physical and mental experiences are to be distinguished.

As recorded in the *Pārājika-kaṇḍa* in the *Suttavibhaṇga* of the Vinaya, the Buddha declares why he is called the supreme, the foremost of the world, by comparing himself to the first baby chicken that splits the egg shell, freeing himself from the dark. With his perfect enlightenment, he is the first to release himself from the shell of defilements and ignorance. In accordance with this declaration, he briefly explains his meditative experience as the path to his perfect enlightenment:

āraddhaṃ kho pana me brāhmaṇa viriyaṃ ahosi asallīnaṃ, upaṭṭhitā sati asammuṭṭhā, passaddho kāyo asāraddho, samāhitaṃ cittaṃ ekaggaṃ...

Vin.III.4.

I have made my effort firm and energetic. My mindfulness is steady without confusion. My body is calmed and reposeful. My mind is composed and tranquil....

Here, the body and the mind are clearly distinguished from each other. According to the context, the body in this passage signifies the whole physical body.

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[562] For example, see S.I.172. Here the Buddha declares to a farmer the reason why he also calls himself a farmer. Various kinds of qualities and religious practice are likened to crops and farming facilities. Among those practices, he mentions that he is body-guarded and speech-guarded.

Another example is in the *Cīvara-khandhaka* of the Vinaya.[563] The lady Visākhā asked for the Buddha's permission to offer regularly eight kinds of sustenance to monks for her whole life. When questioned about the reason, she explained the anticipated mental and physical experiences which would arise while recollecting the meritorious donations:

> tassā me tad anussarantiyā pāmujjaṃ jāyissati, pamuditāya pīti jāyissati, pītimanāya kāyo passambhissati, *passaddhakāyā* sukhaṃ vedayissāmi, sukhiniyā *cittaṃ samādhiyissati*, sā me bhavissati indriyabhāvanā balabhāvanā bojjhaṅgabhāvanā
>
> Vin.I.294.
>
> While recollecting this (the donation given), joy will arise to me. Delight will occur to me who is joyful. The body of mine, whose mind is delighted, will calm down. I, *whose body is calm*, will experience satisfaction. The mind of mine, who is satisfied, will be concentrated. The progress of faculties, of powers, and of constituents of enlightenment will (then) occur to me.

In this instance, while depicting the experience of the physical body, *kāya* is mentioned separately from *'citta'* and *'mana'* - the mind. While it seems that *kāya* in this case refers to the mere physical body as a whole, mind-body interaction is indicated.[564] According to the passage, the bodily calmness results from mental delight (*pīti*). In turn, such bodily calmness engenders further mental progress. Indeed, the cognisance of such physical experience can occur only through mind-body interaction rather than through the purely physical part.[565] This may be explained by means of body as 'sense faculty,' as will be mentioned in the following section.

Body as Sense Faculty: The Representative of Mind-Body Interaction

In the Pali *Tipiṭaka*, six sense faculties are usually listed as '*cakkhu*, *sota*, *ghāna*, *jivhā*, *kāya*, and *mana*,' meaning 'eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind.' The function of these sense faculties requires their linking to the

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563 Vin.I.294.

564 For a comprehensive study regarding the interaction of mind and body in the view of traditional Theravāda, see Harvey, "The Mind-Body Relationship in Pali Buddhism," op. cit.

565 Thus, the Pali commentaries identify 'body' (*kāya*) in this instance as the totality of both *rūpakāya* 'the physical body' and *nāmakāya* 'the group of mental states,' for when the *nāmakāya* calms down, the *rūpakāya* would follow accordingly.

AA.IV.88. *yasmā nāmakāye passaddhe rūpakāyopi passaddhoyeva hoti*, *tasmā* '*nāmakāyo rūpakāyo*'*ti avisesetvāva* '*passaddho kāyo*'*ti vuttaṃ* = it is said 'the body is calm' without distinguishing the *nāmakāya* and *rūpakāya* because when the *nāmakāya* calms down, the *rūpakāya* also becomes calm.

corresponding external faculties.[566] In this place, *kāya*, or body, means the sense of touch. However, its function cannot be said to be purely physical, for it, like the other 4 physical senses, needs to depend on interaction between mind and body. Hence, the PTSD defines this as the 'psychological aspect' of *kāya*.[567]

In the *Sampajānamusāvāda* section of the *Suttavibhaṅga*, six kinds of perception are defined, before proceeding to define the concept of thoughtful lying:

> adiṭṭhaṃ nāma na cakkhunā diṭṭhaṃ. asutaṃ nāma na sotena sutaṃ. amutaṃ nāma na ghānena ghāyitaṃ ... na jivhāya sāyitaṃ ... na kāyena phuṭṭhaṃ ... aviññātaṃ nāma na manasā viññātaṃ.
>
> Vin.IV.2.
>
> 'Unseen' means not seen by eye. 'Unheard' means not heard through ear. 'Unperceived' means not smelt by the smelling sense, not tasted through the tongue, or not touched with the body. 'Unknown' means not known by the mind.

As one of the sense faculties, *kāya* in this instance signifies the physical faculty that apprehends tactile objects.

In some occurrences, the list also includes the objects of these faculties, i.e., '*rūpa*' form, '*sadda*' noise, '*gandha*' smell, '*rasa*' taste, '*phoṭṭhabba*' tactile objects, and '*dhamma*' or '*dhammārammaṇa*' mentally perceivable element.

In the *Samaññaphala-sutta*, the Buddha explains to King Ajātasattu the manner in which sense-faculties are well-guarded. All of the six sense faculties along with their objects are listed in detail, to clarify the means of guarding and the reason:

> Great King, having seen a form with the eye, the monk in this discipline is not attracted to its general appearance. Nor is he attracted to its details. He practises to restrain the eye-faculty, that, so long as he dwells un-restrained, would be the cause for the covetousness, the dejection, the sinful and unwholesome states to diffuse. He observes his eye-faculty and undergoes the restraint in it.... Having heard the noise with the ear... having smelt a smell with the nose... having tasted a taste with the tongue, *having contacted a tactile object with body*...having known an element with the mind, he is not attracted to its general appearance....

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[566] Six external faculties corresponding to the internal faculties are *rūpa, sadda, gandha, rasa, phoṭṭhabba, dhamma*; referring to form, sound, smell, taste, touchables, and mental objects respectively.

[567] Davids and Stede, op. cit., p.207.

D.I.70.

Kāya, in this complete list of sense-faculties along with their objects, signifies the body faculty by which external objects or forces are perceived through physical contact.

In some occurrences, the term *kāya*, when used in this sense, comes as part of compounds. Two popular compounds are *kāya-samphassa* and *kāya-samphassaja*.' The first is used as a noun, meaning 'bodily contact.' The latter, meaning 'originated from bodily contact,' is an adjective qualifying *vedanā* 'sensation.'

In the *Mahānidāna-sutta*,[568] where the Buddha proclaims the profundity of dependent origination (*paṭiccasamuppāda*) to the elder Ānanda, he explains that contact is the origin of sensation, and sensation, in turn, is the cause of desire. Here sensation is classified into six types, according to its origin:

1) '*cakkhu-samphassajā vedanā*' sensation originated from eye contact (seeing) is the cause of *rūpa-taṇhā*, the craving for 'form' or 'visible matters.'
2) '*sota-samphassajā vedanā*' sensation originated from ear contact (hearing) is the cause of *sadda-taṇhā*, the craving for 'sound' or 'audible matters.'
3) '*ghāna-samphassajā vedanā*' sensation originated from smelling is the cause of *gandha-taṇhā*, the craving for smell.
4) '*jivhā-samphassajā vedanā*' sensation originated from tongue contact (tasting) is the cause of *rasa-taṇhā*, the craving for taste.
5) '*kāya-samphassajā vedanā*' sensation originated from bodily contact (touch) is the cause of *phoṭṭhabba-taṇhā*, the craving for a tangible object.

[568] D.II.58.

6) '*mano-samphassajā vedanā*' sensation originated from mental contact is the cause of *dhamma-taṇhā*, the craving for mentally perceivable matters.

The term *kāya* used in these two compounds, *kāyasamphassa* and *kāyasamphassaja*, is used in the sense of body faculty, or touch faculty - the fifth among the six faculties listed above.

In addition, as the titles of the above six kinds of sensation indicate, the mind-body interaction can be generated through the linkage of *any* of the six pairs of corresponding external objects and internal sense faculties. This can be seen in passages wherein the term *kāya* is used in the broader sense of 'the human body that is endowed with all 6 sense faculties,' as mentioned in the *Kiṃsuka-sutta.*[569]

Up to this point, our study has observed the employment of the term *kāya* in different senses related to the human physical body, along with their examples from the Pali passages. It can be noted that the term's application in the canon reflects the complexity either of its structure or of its function as related to mind. All the above listed represent the usage of *kāya* in normal condition. However, in Buddhist philosophy, the use of *kāya* is more complicated in relation to meditation, as will be investigated in the following.

Body and Meditation

The relation of 'body' and meditation can be observed from various angles. Different aspects of body have been employed as meditative objects. Different kinds of bodies can be created out of the highly concentrated mind. Even the

[569] S.IV.191-195. In the *sutta*, the physical body (*kāya*) is said to be comprised of the four great elements (*mahābhūta*), originated from mother and father, raised up with different kinds of food. It is compared with a city endowed with '6 gates' which is the name of the six sense doors or internal faculties (*ajjhattikāyatana*). Mindfulness (*sati*) is likened to the wise gatekeeper who allows only those whom he knows to enter the city. Four pairs of messengers are said to come from different directions, probably on different occasions. Each pair of messengers is compared with *samatha* and *vipassanā*. They are allowed to enter the city to bring 'the message of truth' (*Nibbāna*) to 'the lord of the city' who sits in 'the midst where four ways meet.' Here, 'the lord of the city' is a metaphor for '*viññāṇa*,' the last of the five *khandha*s, whereas the expression 'the four ways' refers to the four great elements (*mahābhūta*). The messengers come to see the lord of the city through a particular path that is compared to 'the noble eightfold path.'

properties of the meditator's physical body can be altered by means of meditation, and thus the body can exercise miraculous powers. A meditator's 'body' can even experience or witness the '*dhamma'* that refers to *nibbāna*. Within this range of usage, the present work will start from 'body as meditative object.'

Bodies as Object of Meditation

Within the scope of Buddhist religious practice, various aspects of the physical body are employed as objects of meditation. Among those meditations described in the Pali canon, a particular meditative method entitled '*kāye kāyānupassanā*' (the observation of body with regard to body) covers a wide range of meditative practice. In this method, a variety of meditative objects employed are related to body and are all entitled '*kāya*' (body).

Within the phrase '*kāye kāyānupassanā*,' the term *kāya* appears twice. The former signifies this physical body, whereas the notion of the latter varies according to the meditative object applied in each option. Thus various notions of *kāya* can be observed in the explanation of this type of meditation.

'The observation of body with regard to body' signifies the first of four foundations of mindfulness (*catu-satipaṭṭhāna*), which the Buddha highly praises with regard to religious practice.[570] Among the four, it is observed that

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[570] The four foundations of mindfulness are as follows: 1) *kāye kāyānupassanā* 'the observation of body with regard to body' 2) *vedanāsu vedanānupassanā* 'the observation of feeling in feelings' 3) *citte cittānupassanā* 'the observation of mind state in mind state' and 4) *dhammesu dhammānupassanā* 'the observation of *dhamma* in *dhamma*s.

This is stated as the direct path (*ekāyana magga*) to the purity of beings, to the full surpassing of sorrow and grief, to the extinction of suffering and displeasure, to the attainment of the right path, and for the realisation of *Nibbāna*. D.II.290, S.V.141. This method is identified with the middle path [A.I.296]: the path that leads to the unconditioned (*Nibbāna*). S.IV.363-4. It is the course of practice for super-knowledge of lust (*rāga*). A.II.256. It is described as the mode of progress to remove and pass beyond views associated with the past and the future. D.III.141. Thus it is said to be synonymous to '*sammā-sati*' or 'right mindfulness' that is the base of '*sammā-samādhi*' or 'right concentration.' D.II.313, M.III.252. Sometimes, it is identified with '*satindriya*' - the controlling principal that is mindfulness. S.V.198.

It is the course to be practised [D.III.276] and the appropriate path which is the monk's own and his paternal (Buddha's) arena. S.V.148-149. It is the mode of progress for disciples the Buddha has announced - the path on which many disciples reside achieving supernormal knowledge and attaining perfection. M.II.11, A.IV.299-302. In *Ānāpānasati-sutta*, the Buddha explains further how these four stations of mindfulness, once practised frequently, can contribute to the perfection of constituents of supreme knowledge (*bojjhaṅga*). M.III.85.

A monk who lives mindfully, in accordance with these four modes of mindfulness, is the possessor of fruitful *jhāna*, the doer of the master's teachings, the supporter of his sermon, not uselessly taking food of state. A.I.39.

the Buddha explains various options of practice only for this first foundation, 'the observation of body with regard to body,' and for the last one, 'the observation of *dhamma* in *dhamma*s.' This, in a way, implies the various and complicated notions of both *kāya* and *dhamma* used as the objects of these two kinds of meditation, so that the detailed depiction of these methods of this practices is required.

In the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna-sutta*, various options of *kāye kāyānupassanā* 'the observation of body with regard to body' are explained: [571]

1) In the first option, the in and out breath is used as the meditative object. This resembles the meditation on breath (*ānāpānasati*). The method is described as observing one's inhalation and exhalation with full awareness, regardless of the length of the breath. It is to observe and perceive the breath as it is, whether it is long or short; to learn to inhale and exhale experiencing all bodies[572] (*sabbakāya*) and tranquilising the bodily conditioning factor (*kāyasaṅkhāra*).

'All bodies' (*sabbakāya*) in this mode of practice, and the bodily conditioning factor (*kāyasaṅkhāra*), are elaborated further in the *Patisambhidāmagga* and in some *suttas*. The *Paṭisambhidāmagga*[573] identifies 'all bodies' with a) material body (*rūpakāya*) comprising physical factors such as the four great elements (*mahābhūta*),[574] the form derived from these four basic elements (*upādāya*

The Buddha always gives an instruction that monks should live mindfully, and be full of awareness D.II.94-95. 'Living mindfully' is identified with the practice of these four foundations of mindfulness, being zealous, fully aware, and mindful; then he would remove covetousness and displeasure in the world. D.III.58, 77, S.IV.211. Such a monk is entitled *atta-dīpa* 'living as own island (or lamp)' and *atta-saraṇa* 'living as own refuge.' There is no need for such a monk to take others as his island (or lamp) or refuge. D.II.100, S.V.154.

These four foundations of mindfulness are not exclusive to monks. Householders can also enjoy this kind of meditation. M.I.340. These four foundations of mindfulness, once well practised, will contribute to the non-declination and for the everlasting of the true doctrine (*saddhamma*) even after the master's demise. S.V.172-174.

[571] D.II.291-298. This *sutta* is repeated in the *Majjhima-nikāya* with a slightly different title '*Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta*.' Particularly for the part regarding the observation of body with regard to body is located at M.I.55-59. Cf. also S.V.322-325, 329-331, 336-337. In these latter references, the four foundations are depicted in a narrower sense. The observation of body is identified with breath only. The other three are also reduced to one aspect accordingly.

[572] The Pali term '*sabbakāya-*' may be translated either as 'all bodies' or 'the whole body.' As the term appears as part of the compound '*sabbakāyapaṭisaṃvedī*,' its plurality or singularity cannot be discerned. Nevertheless, as indicated by the explanations that follow**,** the translation 'all bodies' seems to be more appropriate, for it expresses the plurality of the term.

[573] Ps.I.183.

[574] This refers to four main physical elements, i.e., the earth element (*pathavīdhātu*) or solidity, water element (*āpodhātu*) or liquidity, fire element (*tejodhātu*) or heat, and wind element (*vāyodhātu*) or mobility.

rūpa),[575] in and out breath, its sign and what is related, as well as the bodily conditioning factors (*kāyasaṅkhāra*), and b) mental body (*nāmakāya*) comprising mental factors such as sensation, perception, intention, contact, and consideration, as well as the mental conditioning factors (*cittasaṅkhāra*). Some other *sutta*s identifies the bodily conditioning factor (*kāyasaṃkhāra*) with breath;[576] and sometimes with *kāyasañcetanā*, one of the three intentions that is the cause of pleasure and displeasure.[577]

In this first mode of the mindfulness practice regarding body, the term *kāya* mainly denotes the in and out breath. Here, the breath is used as the object of meditation, and its conditions are employed as the indicator of the mind state. Thus, *kāya* denotes the 'body of wind;' a 'collection or mass of physical elements,' and in a broader sense, it also includes other aspects of the physical body.

2) In the second option, 'the observation of body with regard to body' is described as knowing - while going, standing, sitting, or lying down - that one is going, standing, sitting or lying down respectively. In whatever posture the body is, the practitioner observes and perceives it as such. In this instance, *kāya*, as the object of exercising the mindfulness, is identified with the postures of the physical body.[578]

3) In the third option, 'the observation of body with regard to body' is defined as being fully aware while doing any physical activities, such as stepping forward or backward, looking up or down, stretching out or drawing in the limbs, putting on robes and bowl, sipping, drinking, chewing, tasting,

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[575] As the list of the 'derived forms' is not given in the early texts, there is small variation among different schools on this point. However, all schools agree in most elements listed. For further discussion on this, see Peter Skilling, "Vimuttimagga and Abhayagiri: The Form-Aggregate According to the Saṃskṛtāsaṃskṛtaviniścaya," *Journal of the Pali Text Society* 20 (1994): 171-210.

[576] For example, see M.I.301, S.IV.293, Ps.I.184.

[577] For example, see S.II.39-40, Vbh.135.

[578] D.II.292.

excreting, urinating, going, standing, sitting, listening, staying awake, speaking, or keeping silent. Here, *kāya* denotes the physical movement or activities.[579]

4) In the fourth option, the method is said to involve contemplation of this physical body, which is 'bound with skin and full of various kinds of the unclean' from feet to head hairs. It is to observe analytically that, in this body, there are head hairs, body hairs, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, tendons, bones, bone marrows, kidney, heart, liver, pleura, spleen, lung, large and small intestines, undigested food, excrement, bile, sputum, pus, blood, sweat, fat, tears, grease, saliva, mucus, synovic fluid, and urine.

The description here resembles the meditation on the ugliness in body (*kāye asubhasaññā* or *kāye asubhānupassanā*) explained elsewhere,[580] but the way to look at the object might be slightly different. Although the depiction of the method begins with the statement that this physical body is 'full of various kinds of the unclean,' the focal point of this meditative option is the distinguishability of bodily constituents. This is illustrated metaphorically with the image of a keen-eyed man who, on seeing various kinds of grains contained in a bag, can distinguish them as wheat, paddy, beans, vetches, sesame, and rice.[581]

In brief, this method involves an observation and differentiation of the external and internal organs, limbs and parts of the body, and even wastes to be excreted, which are contained in this body. Thus, the notion of *kāya* as object of this meditative mode is 'the aggregations of components constituting the physical body.'

5) The fifth meditative option of this kind is similar to the previous one in that it is centred on the distinctiveness of bodily constituents. The main difference is that the object to be looked at is regarded with a greater degree of nuance. It is

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579 D.II.292-293.

580 A.V.109.

581 D.II.293-294.

to contemplate that this physical body is composed of four main physical elements, i.e., the earth element, water element, fire element, and wind element. Thus *kāya*, as object of this meditative mode, signifies an assemblage of these different elements.[582]

6-9) From the sixth to the ninth options, the object of meditation is the dead body in various aspects: the corpse that is swollen, turning blue, and decomposed; the animal-gnawed corpse; the scattered corpse; and the corpse that remains only white-boned. The practitioner, on seeing a dead body of such kinds abandoned in a graveyard, applies it to his or her own body by reflecting that this body is of the same nature. Thus, in these meditative modes, *kāya*, or the object of meditation, signifies the change and the deterioration of the physical body - its impermanence.[583]

In this manner (with any of the nine options of meditation), the practitioner stays observing body with regard to body either internally, externally, or both internally and externally. Otherwise, he lives observing the rise, the passing away, or both the rise and passing away in the body. The awareness that arises to him, 'there is the body,' is just for his knowledge and reflection. He lives independent and is not attached to anything in the world. This process is included as the last part of each option,[584] indicating its import as part of the whole process of 'the observation of body with regard to body.'

The above statement, that the awareness arises just for the practitioner's knowledge and reflection, provides an implication for practice: whilst exercising each mode of mindfulness, the meditator's mind is more likely to be

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[582] D.II.294-295.

[583] D.II.295-297. The aim of this kind of practice is to detach oneself from strong attachment with one's own body as 'self.' Considering from the context of the discourse, this mode of practice does not aim to create a feeling of repulsion on the body but rather to emphasise on the impermanent nature of one's own body.

[584] *Iti ajjhattaṃ vā kāye kāyānupassī viharati, bahiddhā vā kāye kāyānupassī viharati, ajjhatta-bahiddhā vā kāye kāyānupassī viharati. Samudaya-dhammānupassī vā kāyasmiṃ viharati, vaya-dhammānupassī vā kāyasmiṃ viharati, samudaya-vaya-dhammānupassī vā kāyasmiṃ viharati. ฟAtthi kāyoฟti vā pan'assa sati paccupaṭṭhitā hoti yāvad eva ñāṇa-mattāya patissati-mattāya. Anissito ca viharati na ca kiñci loke upādiyati. Evam pi bhikkhave monk kāye kāyānupassī viharati.* D.II.292-298.

centred on the 'knowing' and the 'awareness' rather than on the object of meditation. As we have already seen from all options described above, no matter what aspect of the body is used as the meditative object, the main import of practice is that the meditator 'observes and knows it as it is.' Thus, the meditative object works merely as a vehicle for the practitioner to arrive at this stage.

Nevertheless, we can see from this *sutta* that the term *kāya* signifying the physical body employed as meditative objects can be looked at in various aspects: as an aggregation either of several organs or of different material elements, as parts or whole of the physical body, and as movement, activities, or other conditions related to the body.

In such an analytical sense, a 'body' can be seen as a congeries of various organs, components, or material elements. Its composition and function is complex. Different parts in the 'whole' aggregate are functionally inter-related. Seen in this way, the title 'body' conveys a sense which is much more complicated than a 'mere collection' or 'congregatation.'

With this kind of analytical reflection, the physical body is described generally in the Pali canon as possessing form, composed of the four great elements, originated from mother and father, raised with boiled rice and junket, impermanent, and subject to anointing, massaging, breaking up, and destruction.[585] Also, it is described as 'this body, subsisting on food, abides on account of food. Without food, it does not abide.'[586]

All of the descriptions reflect the nature of the physical body as impermanent, conditioned, and not-self. It indicates that the aim of this form of contemplation is to release the practitioner from strong attachment to the physical body. Indeed, it is probable that, at this stage, the meditator is not yet completely

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[585] *Ayaṃ kho kāyo rūpī cātumahābhūtiko mātāpettikasambhavo odanakummāsupacayo aniccucchādana-parimaddana-bhedana-viddhaṃsanadhammo.* S.V.370.

[586] *Ayaṃ kāyo āhāraṭṭhitiko āhāram paṭicca tiṭṭhati anāhāro no tiṭṭhati.* S.V.65.

detached from the physical body,[587] for further practice is still required. Nevertheless, being less attached is supportive in preparing oneself for further practice, i.e., *samādhi* and so on.

There are many levels of practice belonging to this meditative method. Generally, the observation of body with regard to body, along with the other three foundations of mindfulness, is equated with *sammāsati* 'right mindfulness,' which serves as the basis of *sammāsamādhi* 'right concentration,'[588] usually identified with the four levels of *jhāna*.[589] As described in *Dantabhūmi-sutta*, mindfulness brings the practitioner closest to the first *jhāna*, at the state of abandonment of the five obstacles of concentration (*pañca-nīvaraṇa*). In such a case, it can be said that mindfulness is associated with the first *jhāna*[590] when 'the observation of body with regard to body' nurtures the *vitakka* and *vicāra*.[591] In the higher practice, when *vitakka* and *vicāra* are to be removed, as directed in the same *sutta*, mindfulness brings the practitioner to the second *jhāna*.

According to the *sutta*, in such higher practices, the monk is to observe the body with regard to body without thinking a thought associated with the body.[592] This implies the meditative technique of 'mere observation:' the process of removal of *vitakka* and *vicāra* that leads to the attainment of the second *jhāna*. The same holds true for other three foundations of mindfulness.

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[587] This degree of detachment seems to be identified with (advanced) *saṃvara* (restraint) in some *sutta*s. For example, see S.IV.200. Cf. also S.V.294. In the latter, it is clear that the advanced degree of *saṃvara* (self restraint) is equated with mindfulness.

[588] It is also explained in detail in *Paṭisambhidāmagga* that mental concentration (*samādhi*) arises as a result of the practice of mindfulness. Ps.I.95

[589] For example, see D.II.313, M.III.252. In these references, the four foundations of mindfulness is said to be the right mindfulness (*sammāsati*) and the four *jhānas* are said to be the right concentration (*sammāsamādhi*).

[590] *So ime pañca nīvaraṇe pahāya cetaso upakkilese paññāya dubbalīkaraṇe kāye kāyānupassī viharati ātāpī sampajāno satimā, vineyya loke abhijjhādomanassaṃ*; *vedanāsu --pe--*; *citte dhammesu dhammānupassī viharati ātāpī sampajāno satimā, vineyya loke abhijjhādomanassaṃ*. For example, see M.III.136. We see from this passage that the four foundations of mindfulnesss re-place the constituents of the first *jhāna*.

[591] *Vitakka* and *Vicāra*, usually translated as 'reflection and investigation' or 'applied thought and sustained thought,' are two constituents of the first *jhāna* that help suspend the five obstacles of concentration and thus allow the mind to attain the first *jhāna*. Here, the mindfulness or 'the observation of body with regard to body' serves as *vitakka* and *vicāra* themselves. For illustration of all mental factors of the four *jhāna*s, see Crangle, *The Origin and Development of Early Indian Contemplative Practices*, op. cit., p. 204.

[592] *Kāye kāyānupassī viharati mā cā kāyūpasaṃhitaṃ vitakkaṃ vitakkesi*. M.III.136.

Thus, Hamilton is correct in her observation: 'a monk is merely to observe it quite free from any connotation.'[593] From the second *jhāna*, originating in the mindfulness of 'the observation of body with regard to body,' the practitioner can proceed to the final liberation.[594]

In another *sutta*, it is also evident that each of the four foundations of mindfulness can be associated with the four *jhāna*s.[595]

The first foundation of mindfulness, 'the observation of body with regard to body,' is sometimes identified with *kāyagatā-sati* 'mindfulness going into the body.'[596] This practice is self-sufficient to bring the practitioner to the highest goal of Buddhist practice: *Nibbāna*,[597] as Hamilton rightly observes.[598] In some places, the Buddha even states that people who do not experience *kāyagatā-sati* cannot experience the deathless (*nibbāna*),[599] as Collins also notes.[600] At some stage, however, the results of partial practice of mindfulness and that of the entire practice are still distinguishable. For example, in the *Satipaṭṭhāna-saṃyutta*, the elder Anuruddha declares that a monk is a learner or trainee

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[593] Sue Hamilton, "From Buddha to Buddhaghoṣa: Changing Attitudes Toward the Human Body in Theravāda Buddhism," in *Religious Reflections on the Human Body*, ed. Jane Marie Law (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995), p. 51.

[594] *So vitakkavicārānaṃ vūpasamā ajjhattaṃ sampasādanaṃ cetaso ekodibhāvaṃ avitakkaṃ avicāraṃ samādhijaṃ pītisukhaṃ dutiyajjhānaṃ, tatiyajjhānaṃ upasampajja viharati. So evaṃ samāhite citte ... nāparaṃ itthattāyāti pajānāti.* M.III.136.

[595] A.IV.299-302. In this *sutta*, a monk asked for the Buddha's brief instruction regarding a course of practice from the beginning to the attainment of Arhatship. He followed the Buddha's instruction and, not long after that, attained Arhatship.

The whole course instructed is composed of nine steps of practice. It is stated that the further step is to be taken when the monk is proficient in the earlier step. The nine steps are: 1. mind-guarding in the manner that the arisen unwholesome state could not stay in the mind. 2. mind-release in loving kindness (*mettā-cetovimutti*) and after being proficient in it, taking the four *jhāna*s. 3.-5. mind-releasing in compassion (*karuṇā-cetovimutti*), empathetic joy (*muditā-cetovimutti*), and equanimity (*upekkhā-cetovimutti*); and after being proficient in each of them, taking the four *jhāna*s. 6. living observing body with regard to body (*kāye kāyānupassī*) and after being proficient in it, taking the four *jhāna*s. 7-9. living observing sensation in sensation (*vedanāsu vedanānupassī*), thought in thought (*citte cittānupassī*), and *dhamma* in *dhamma* (*dhammesu dhammānupassī*); and after being proficient in each of them, taking the four *jhāna*s.

From the course outlined above, we see that steps 2-9 are practised in association with the four *jhāna*s. Normally, each of these steps (2-9) can lead to *jhāna*(s) on their own. The mention of four *jhāna*s along with each step emphasises the degree of proficiency that all steps are to be practised to the level of advanced *samādhi*, one after another.

[596] Hamilton, "From Buddha to Buddhaghosa," op. cit. Cf. also S.V.170. Here *kāyagatā-sati* is classed in *Satipaṭṭhāna-Saṃyutta*. Its detailed description generally resembles that of *kāye kāyānupassī* 'observing body with regard to body.' For example of the description of *kāyagatā-sati*, 'mindfulness going into the body,' see *Kāyagatāsati-sutta*. M.III.88-99.

[597] For example, see A.I.45.

[598] Hamilton, "From Buddha to Buddhaghoṣa," op. cit., p. 50.

[599] A.I.45.

[600] Collins, "The Body in Theravāda Buddhist Monasticism," op. cit., p. 192.

(*sekha*) because of partial practice of the four foundations of mindfulness, and is a learned noble person or non-trainee (*asekha*) because of the entire practice.[601]

His declaration, on the one hand, suggests that the practice of the first foundation only is not sufficient to bring the practitioner to the final liberation. On the other hand, as meditative experiences are interconnected, one can serve as the basis of another; the passage also suggests that, practically, the cultivation of *kāyagatāsati* or the first foundation of mindfulness in its fullest degree can lead the practitioner to the entire practice and experience of all four foundations of mindfulness, and finally to the attainment of the highest goal.

In any case, mindfulness is essential in all states of practice. But the practice of directing mindfulness toward material objects is used only in the beginning. Once the practitioner's mindfulness has developed to a higher state, the employment of a material object is no longer required. More subtle objects such as sensation, thought, and mentally perceivable phenomena are thus required instead,[602] so that the mind can proceed to higher states.

In the *Kāyagatāsati-sutta*, the Buddha instructs how to practise 'the mindfulness going into the body' in the most fruitful manner. The *sutta* begins with the nine options resembling those described in the section on 'the observation of body with regard to body' (*kāye kāyānupassanā*) in the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna-sutta*. Following the methodological explanation of each option is a passage depicting the development of the meditator's mind state:

> Tassa evaṃ appamattassa ātāpino pahitattassa viharato ye te gehasitā sarasaṃkappā te pahīyanti, tesam pahānā ajjhattam eva cittaṃ santiṭṭhati sannisīdati ekodihoti samādhiyati. Evam pi, bhikkhave, bhikkhu kāyagataṃ satiṃ bhāveti.
>
> M.III.90

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[601] S.V.175.

[602] The contemplation of *dhamma* in *dhamma*s, the fourth among the four foundations of mindfulness, involves also the observation of the 5 *khandha*s, including *rūpa* (form), and the internal and external sense faculties are related to the physical body. Nevertheless, the object of observation at this level is the 'rise and cease' of them which is more abstract and should be regarded as referring to mentally perceiveable phenomena, rather than to their physical aspects.

> As the monk lives thus heedful, zealous, and resolute; any memories and thoughts related to the household life are abandoned. Because of the abandonment of them, his mind becomes still, settled internally, concentrated to one-pointedness. In this manner too, the monk develops mindfulness going into the body.

It is clear from the passage that this *sutta* informs us of an advanced level of mindfulness where 'the mindfulness going into the body' is already associated with the concentration of mind (*samādhi*). This, on the one hand, affirms that mindfulness must be present in all states of practice.[603] On the other hand, this implies also a more advanced state of 'mindfulness going into the body.'

Moreover, following the nine options of mindfulness mentioned above, it is remarkable that this *sutta* even identifies each of the four *jhāna*s as 'the mindfulness going into the body.' It implies a step further in the practice, where the last two constituents of the noble eightfold path, right mindfulness (*sammāsati*) and right concentration (*sammāsamādhi*), become one.[604] And this is defined as the most fruitful manner of practising mindfulness: to practise in such a way that mindfulness invariably leads to, and becomes unified with, *samādhi*.[605]

To understand the notions of *kāya* 'body' in these last options, the study will now turn to the detailed description of *kāya* in each *jhāna* level:

1) In the first *jhāna*, the practitioner permeates, fills up and suffuses his body (*kāya*) with the joy and pleasure born of seclusion, without leaving any part of

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[603] As Anālayo observes, "The continuous presence of well-established *sati* is a requirement for absorption (*jhāna*)." Anālayo, *Satipaṭṭhāna: The Direct Path to Realization* (Birmingham: Windhorse, 2003), p. 61.

Also, in many *sutta*s, the compound '*upekkhāsatipārisuddhi*' (the purity of equanimity and mindfulness) mentioned in the description of the fourth *jhāna* indicates the presence of *sati* (mindfulness) in its purer form in the fourth *jhāna*. See, for example, M.I22, 41, 90, 159, 182,

[604] The noble eightfold path (*ariya-aṭṭhaṅgika-magga*) comprises eight qualities indispensable for enlightenment. These qualities are generally said to be inter-dependent, for the former one serves as basis of the latter: 1) *sammādiṭṭhi* right view 2) *sammāsaṅkappa* right aspiration 3) *sammāvācā* right speech 4) *sammākammanta* right action 5) *sammā-ājīva* right mode of livelihood 6) *sammāvāyāma* right effort 7) *sammāsati* right mindfulness and 8) *sammāsamādhi* right concentration. The four foundations of mindfulness (*catu-satipaṭṭhāna*) are usually identified with the seventh qualities - *sammāsati* 'the right mindfulness.' However, in this *sutta*, the description of *kāyagatāsait* 'mindfulness going in the body' covers both mindfulness and concentration.

[605] Anālayo discusses also the 'interdependence' of the 'right concentration' (*sammāsamādhi*) with the first seven factors of the noble eightfold path that is related to the unification of the mind. Anālayo, op. cit., pp. 73-74, p. 74, note 29.

the body untouched by those mental factors.[606] The same manner of suffusion of the body with mental factors (pleasure and so on) continues in the following *jhāna*s, but with different qualities of those factors.

2) In the second *jhāna*, his whole body is filled up with the joy and pleasure[607] born of composure (*samādhi*).[608]

3) In the third *jhāna*, he experiences pleasure with the body and his whole body is filled up with the pleasure divested of joy.[609]

4) In the fourth *jhāna*, it is said that the pure and bright mind (*parisuddhena cetasā pariyodātena*) suffuses his whole body.[610]

In these four modes of practice, the *sutta* states clearly that the practitioner suffuses 'this body' with the mentioned mental factors.[611] This gives the impression that 'this body' refers only to the physical body. Nevertheless, as those mental factors, such as the joy and pleasure born of seclusion or composure, are experienced mainly by the mind rather than by the physical body, and as the mind and body are necessarily interconnected, it is more likely that the term *kāya* here denotes both the physical and mental parts, i.e., the whole being or the five *khandha*s, rather than the physical body only.

To conclude, from the investigation of body and meditation, it is observed that 'body' as meditative objects can be looked at in various aspects related to the physical body, while 'body' in the depiction of meditative experience seems to refer to both the physical and the mental body.

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[606] *So imam eva kāyaṃ vivekajena pītisukhena abhisandeti parisandeti paripūreti parippharati, nāssa kiñci sabbāvato kāyassa vivekajena pītisukhena apphutaṃ hoti.* M.III.92.

[607] The Pali term '*sukhaṃ*' has wide range of usage. It may vary from physical comfort or well being, pleasure in daily life, up to pleasure in meditation and happiness in the advanced attainment.

[608] *So imam eva kāyaṃ samādhijena pītisukhena abhisandeti parisandeti paripūreti parippharati, nāssa kiñci sabbāvato kāyassa samadhijena pītisukhena apphutaṃ hoti.* M.III.93.

[609] *... sukhañca kāyena paṭisaṃvedī ... So imam eva kāyaṃ nippītisukhena abhisandeti parisandeti paripūreti parippharati, nāssa kiñci sabbāvato kāyassa nippītikena sukhena apphutaṃ hoti.* M.III.93.

[610] *imam eva kāyaṃ parisuddhena cetasā pariyodātena pharitvā nisinno hoti, nāssa kiñci sabbāvato kāyassa parisuddhena cetasā pariyodātena apphutaṃ hoti.* M.III.94.

[611] *So imam eva kāyaṃ ... -sukhena abhisandeti....*

In the following, our exploration will proceed to a particular type of body that can be ‘created’ or ‘called into being’ through highly concentrated mind.

Mind-made Body (*Manomaya-kāya*)

The mind-made body (*manomaya-kāya*)[612] is one of the most well-known terms regarding bodies other than the human physical body. This body is cited frequently in scholarly works, especially when discussing or referring to the early Buddhist origin of Mahāyāna's three-body (*Tri-kāya*) theory.[613] This term signifies the body of *rūpāvacara* deities,[614] on the one hand; and the body arisen from the power of concentration (*samādhi*) of a human, on the other. Both of them are generally described with the same phrase ‘*rūpī manomayo sabbaṅgapaccaṅgī ahīnindriyo*,’[615] meaning ‘possessing form, mind-made, complete with all limbs and parts, not defective in any faculties.’

This section studies about the mind-made body of a human in two aspects: its general properties and its significance.

1. General properties of the mind-made body

The mind-made body is a kind of advanced meditative attainment. Generally, it is found in the following Pali formula:

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[612] The term ‘*manomaya*’ here can be translated either as ‘made of mind’ or as ‘made by mind.’ The former implies that this body consists of mental constituents. The latter implies the rise of this kind of body by the power of the mind, without any concern on the composition of the body. As the information given in the early texts seem somewhat insufficient to consider its composition accurately, and as it is certain that this body is ‘called up’ by means of a highly concentrated mind, the present study prefers its translation as ‘made by mind’ to the other. Nevertheless, for the sake of simplicity, the term is mentioned sometimes simply as ‘mind-made,’ as generally employed in previous works.

[613] For example, Xing mentions the *manomayakāya* as the origin from which the idea of *Nirmāṇakāya* originates. Xing, op. cit., p. 136. He mentions also that the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* identifies *dhammakāya* with the mind-made body (*manomayakāya*). (p. 96.) This is similar to Falk’s claim that the *dhammakāya* is in fact the mind-made body (*manomayakāya*). Falk, *Nāma-Rūpa and Dharma-Rūpa*, op. cit., p. 674. Nevertheless, the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra’s* conception of the mind-made body is quite different from that mentioned in the Pali canon. See Xing, op. cit., p. 96. Cf. Information regarding the mind-made body in the Pali canon, as provided in this work.

[614] *Rūpāvacara* deities are those who were reborn with their consciousness abiding in *rūpa-jhāna* (absorption attained by meditation on form). People who die while abiding in a *rūpa-jhāna*, either mundane or supramundane, will be reborn in a mind-made body. A.II.126-8.

It might be argued that it is not mentioned obviously in some occurrences that the deities obtaining this body must be *rūpāvacara*, as sometimes it is simply related in the *sutta*s that the individuals died and were reborn to the mind-made body. For example, see A.III.50-51, A.III.122. Comparing the said evidence with other *sutta*s, however, we see that the individuals whom the *sutta*s simply mention as such were non-returners (*anāgāmī*). A.IV.211, D.II.92. They are adept meditators, well known for their *jhāna* attainment. This confirms that they are *rūpāvacara* deities.

[615] For example, see D.I.34, D.I.195, M.II.17-18.

> So imamhā kāyā aññaṃ kāyaṃ abhinimmināti rūpiṃ manomayaṃ sabbaṅga-paccaṅgiṃ ahīnindriyaṃ.
>
> D.I.77.
>
> He creates out of this body another body which possesses form, is mind-made, complete with all limbs and parts, not defective in any faculties.

A number of obscurities are present in the translation of this passage. The first involves the translation of the verb '*abhinimmināti*.' This verb, on its own, conveys a sense of 'creating through higher power.' However, the metaphor provided suggests an alternative translation. Here, the 'creation' of the mind-made body parallels the manner in which a man 'pulls out a reed from its sheath, a sword from its scabbard, and a snake from its slough.' The verb '*abhinimmināti*' is compared with '*pavāheyya*'[616] in the sense of 'causing to flow or carrying away;' '*uddhareyya*'[617] in the sense of 'drawing out, uprooting, or removing;' and '*pabbāheyya*' or '*ubbāheyya'* in the sense of 'drawing forth, pulling out, or taking out.'[618] According to such metaphors, it seems that the 'creation' (*abhinimmināti*) in this passage refers to the 'calling up' or 'manifestation' of something already exists yet concealed, rather than 'making up a new thing.' The manner of 'calling up' such body may be either similar to 'drawing out' something from its cover, or similar to causing a stream to flow continuously from a pipe, considering from the parallel verb '*pavāheyya*' employed in the metaphor.

The obscurity gives way to different scholarly interpretations. Falk, for example, interprets the mind-made body mentioned in this passage as 'a subtle body hidden within the gross *rūpa*.'[619] This agrees with the idea that it is already extant but to be called up from the physical body. Reynolds seems to support this idea as he writes 'the Buddha attains this body through concentrative meditation known as *jhāna*.'[620] This implies that the body was

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[616] D.I.77.

[617] D.I.77

[618] M.I.17.

[619] Falk, *Nāma-Rūpa and Dharma-Rūpa*, op. cit., p. 109.

[620] Reynolds, "The Several Bodies of the Buddha," op. cit., p. 379.

already there, waiting for the practitioner's accomplishment through his/her concentrated mind.

Xing, however, interprets it in a different way. He sees it as the process of duplication of the body, similar to the self-multiplication mentioned in the exercises of supernatural power (*iddhividhī*).[621] According to him, the only difference between the creation of a mind-made body and self-multiplication is that, with the former method, the meditator can create only one body at a time while, with *iddhividhī*, he can create as many bodies as he wishes.[622]

This is speculative, for such a minor difference seems insufficient to separate the calling up of the mind-made body as a different method, while self-multiplication is grouped together with other kinds of supernatural power of a far different nature, such as to make the body visible or invisible, dive in and out of the earth, pass through a wall, and so on.

In any case, Xing observes rightly that 'the compilers describe spiritual attainments in ascending order.'[623] The separate mention of the calling up of this mind-made body in the immediately preceding order to the supernatural powers (*iddhividhī*) suggests two implications. On the one hand, it seems likely that the creation or calling up of this body is regarded as a different step of practice. On the other hand, it is likely to be a basic or preliminary practice for the practitioner to proceed to exercise those supernatural powers.

2. The significance of calling up the mind-made body

In the *Sāmaññaphala-sutta*, the ability to call up this mind-made body is defined as one of the excellent and sublime fruits of life as a Buddhist monk.[624]

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[621] This perhaps follows traditional Theravāda sources. For example, the commentary to the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* identifies the ability of calling up the mind-made body with self-multiplication. AA.I.216.

[622] Xing, op. cit., p. 137.

[623] Ibid.

[624] D.I.77. The *sutta* says about the lives of Buddhist monks. But, indeed, the practice is applicable to both monks and lay people.

Also it is a course of practice which the Buddha teaches his disciples to cultivate, as he declares to the brahmin Mahāsakuludāyi:

> Moreover, Udāyi, the course of practice I proclaim to my disciples; in the manner that they call into being, out of this body, another body possessing form, mind-made, complete with all limbs and parts, not defective in any faculties; just as a man would draw out a reed from its sheath, and know 'this is the sheath and this is the reed, the sheath is one and the reed is another, and the reed is drawn out from the sheath;' just as a man would draw out a snake from its slough ... a sword from its scabbard ...
>
> In this way, Udāyi, the course of practice I proclaim to my disciples in the manner that they call up from this body.... Because of this, many disciples of mine live attaining the final perfection in transcendental knowledge.
>
> M.II.17-18.

From the passages, it is required that the practitioner knows not only how to call up this mind-made body, but also its separation and distinction from the physical body. It is a separate body that is complete with all faculties.

The description 'not defective in any faculties' (*ahīnindriyaṃ*) is likely to signify something comparable to the human six sense faculties[625] that can be classified into physical and mental. Thus, the phrase 'not defective in any faculties' denotes its being complete in all the elements of both body and mind. In other words, it is probably 'another complete being' composed of its own set of five aggregates (*pañcakkhandha*) - separate from, yet related to, the physical body.[626]

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[625] In fact, the word '*indriya*' may be understood in three different ways. First, it can denote the six sense faculties. Secondly, it can refer to the 'whole bodily appearance' as usually found in the phrase '*vippasannāni indriyāni*' when monks ask each other about in which kind of meditative state (*vihāra*) the fellow monk is dwelling so that his 'faculties' look bright and clear. Thirdly, it can refer to 'five controlling faculties' (*pañcindriya*) which are contributive to the realisation. (See note 327 for details of the five controlling faculties.) However, it is more likely that the word *indriya* in this passage refers to the sense faculties. Otherwise, it may refer to the whole bodily appearance, where the whole word '*ahīnindriya*' means possessing 'not a bad appearance.' In other words, it means that the mind-made body 'looks good.' In the present context, our study takes the first meaning that the term refers to the six sense faculties, while it does not deny the possibility of other meanings.

[626] Apart from this expression (*ahīnindriya*), the early texts do not provide further information as regard the composition of this kind of body. Such information, however, can be found in traditional accounts. For example, see Vbh.405; Vasubandhu, Poussin, and Pruden, *Abhidharmakośa Bhāṣyam,* op. cit., pp. 175-176. Traditional accounts mention five aggregates (*pañcakkhandha*) of these beings.

Scholars differ in this regard. Xing states that this body is 'immaterial.' Xing, op. cit., p. 136. Falk describes it as "consists of the four psychic *skandhas* only" and "It is pure *nāma* (without *rūpa*), i.e., *dharma*." Falk, *Nāma-Rūpa and Dharma-Rūpa*, op. cit., p. 106. She defends her statement by saying that these four *skandhas* "have a functional value different from that which they have when they are liable, or when they tend, to connection with *rūpa*." Ibid., p. 15. For Harvey, the mind-made body is "related to the realm of (pure) form." Harvey, "The Mind-Body Relationship in Pali Buddhism," op. cit., p. 36. It is still "form" but with different qualities.

The Buddha's above statement suggests that the ability to call up this mind-made body is important to the attainment of the highest religious goal. At least, it must be of great benefit as a course of mental practice in order to proceed to the ultimate goal.

Regarding this kind of meditative attainment, the elder Cullapanthaka is the foremost among the Buddha's disciples; as the Buddha praises him,[627] and as the elder himself declares, "Having reached the perfection in the mind-made bodies in all respects, I live free from defilements because of the precise knowledge in all defilements."[628] It may be noted that, in his declaration, the mind-made body is put in plural form, indicating that there can be more than one of such subtle bodies that can be 'called into being' in highly concentrated states.[629]

To call up such a mind-made body from the physical body requires proficiency of mental practice, as is described in the *Sāmaññaphala-sutta*:

> So evaṃ samāhite citte parisuddhe pariyodāte anaṅgaṇe vigatūpakkilese mudubhūte kammaniye ṭhite ānejjappatte manomayaṃ kāyaṃ abhinimmināya cittaṃ abhinīharati abhininnāmeti. ...
>
> D.I.77.
>
> While his mind is thus serene, purified, translucent, spotless, devoid of impurities, pliable, prepared for work, steady, and imperturbable, he directs and bends his mind to create a mind-made body. ...

In this manner, the creation of a mind-made body is described always as resulting from a high level of concentration. According to the context, only the concentrated mind at the level of the four *jhāna*s can create such a body. Therefore, this mind-made body, being a meditative experience of a human, is necessarily associated with *jhāna*s. Relying on *jhāna*s, a human can call up a mind-made body from his physical body. In that particular state, when the meditator passes his consciousness to the mind-made body and temporarily has

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[627] A.I.24.

[628] *Manomayesu kāyesu sabbattha pāramiṅgato sabbāsave pariññāya viharāmi anāsavo*. Ap.I.59

[629] Presumably, the manner in which many bodies are 'called up' can be similar to a continuous flow of water stream from a pipe, as stated earlier. Cf. p.183.

no more concern or sensation in his physical body, the mind-made body can be regarded as more real or more important. In other words, it seems to be a 'new, true (yet temporary) personality' of the meditator as long as his consciousness abides therein. At that point, the meditator's physical body may be regarded as like clothes or a house in which this 'new personality' stays, so that the meditator's more purified mind is detached from holding such a physical body as 'self,' 'I,' or 'mine.' Indeed, Buddhist philosophy that emphasises the impermanence of the 'corruptible physical body' seems to support this point. In this manner, the practice of 'calling up the mind-made body' is contributive to the realisation and the attainment of Buddhist ultimate goal, as the Buddha declares to the brahmin Udāyi in the above statement. Harvey's opinion seems to be in the same line, as he states, "consciousness is seen as able to leave the physical body by means of a mind-made body."[630] But perhaps he means the mind-made body employed to exercise supranatural power, as he states afterward, "With such a body, a person can exercise psychic powers such as going through solid objects, being in many places at once, or flying."[631]

It is mentioned elsewhere that the Buddha sometimes travelled to the Brahmā world with this body.[632] This reinforces the above statement that the mind-made body is a separate 'whole' being apart from the physical body, while there is also a relation between them.

In this part, the study has discussed about the mind-made body which a meditator can 'call into being' in a highly concentrated state. The study has observed both similarities and differences of this 'subtle' body and the normal human physical body. As regards their similarities, the mind-made body is of a composite nature, as is the physical body. It can be regarded as a separate 'whole being,' comprises both 'mind' and 'body,' and can be attained through

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[630] Harvey, "The Mind-Body Relationship in Pali Buddhism," op. cit., p. 36.

[631] Ibid. According to the Pali canon, the psychic powers can be performed using either the physical body or the mind-made body. For further details, see S.V.282.

[632] S.V.282, Ap.235.

high concentration. The practice of 'calling up' of the mind-made body is significant to the 'path to realisation,' for it is instructed or prescribed as a course contributive to the final realisation. On its own, it is counted also as a sublime fruit of being a Buddhist monk. It is likely also that this meditative technique is employed as the basis for further exercise of supranatural power.

In the following part, the study will continue on the 'creation of various bodies' through 'supranatural power' (*iddhividhi*).

Creation of Various Bodies and the Physical Body Exercising Supernormal Powers

A further step following the calling up of a mind-made body is the exercise of miraculous power. As Prince states:

> The great powers of the mind, when developed through the practice of concentration and meditation, has always been taken for granted in Buddhist doctrine, and it is only natural that the Buddha should have been assumed to have achieved complete proficiency in this field, and thereby to have acquired a range of knowledge and a variety of psychic powers outside the scope of other men.[633]

This seems to apply also to the Buddha's disciples who undertake the courses prescribed. Miraculous exercise is also regarded as a course of mental practice conducive to final realisation, as is the calling up of the mind-made body.[634]

As for the Buddha himself, miraculous power is employed sometimes as a tool supplementary to the propagation of Buddhist teaching, even though it is subordinated to the miracle of teaching (*anusāsanī-pāṭihāriya*) in that regard.[635] A number of his miraculous exercises are recorded in relation to his attempt to convert Uruvela-Kassapa.[636] The miracles performed were of different kinds, such as the emission of multi-coloured flames, the travel to the Tāvatiṃsa

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[633] A. J. Prince, "The Conception of Buddhahood in Earlier and Later Buddhism," *The Journal of the Oriental Society of Australia* 7, no. 1-2 (1970): 87-118, 94.

[634] M.II.18-19.

[635] D.I.212-214.

[636] Vin.I.24-32.

realm and bringing back fruits therefrom, or his ability in reading the mind of Kassapa and acting accordingly to it.[637]

It is usually said that the Buddha can travel from one place to another place within the human world, or from this world to heavens or Brahmā worlds, merely by disappearing from the place he currently inhabits, and appearing in another place within a short moment, just as quick as a strong man stretches or bends his arm.[638]

This is not exclusive to the Buddha, for it is recorded clearly that his disciples can do the same.[639] This kind of miraculous power is performed through the psychic powers (*iddhi*) resulting from an advanced level of concentration (*samādhi*), as explained in the *Sāmaññaphala-sutta*.[640] Here, the Buddha defines the psychic powers as an excellent fruit of living a *Samaṇa*-life. A monk, having mastered the mind, inclines his mind toward the exercise of several kinds of supernatural power. The examples given are:

1. Having been one, he becomes many; and having been many, he becomes one.
2. He becomes visible and invisible.
3. He goes unobstructed through a wall, a rampart, or a mountain, as if through the air.
4. He dives in and out through the earth, just as through water.
5. He walks un-sinking on water, just as on the earth.
6. He goes cross-legged in the air, just like a winged bird.

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[637] For a discussion of whether or not such miraculous powers can acceptably be referred to in a modern academic study, see Xing, op. cit., p. 17. Cf. also the section of 'Methodology' in the introductory chapter of this work.

[638] For example, see Vin.I.105, S.I.144, A.I.64.

[639] For example, see Vin.I.214, S.I.144-145.

[640] D.I.78-9.

7. He touches and polishes the so mighty and powerful moon and sun with his hand.
8. He continues his exercise with the body even as far as the Brahmā world.

From the formula given above, the course of miraculous exercise starts from the ability of self-multiplication. Herein, it is described briefly, "Having been one, he becomes many; and having been many, he becomes one."[641] This method of self-multiplication seems to imply the similarity of the original physical body of the meditator and the 'created' bodies.[642] It is not stated clearly in the texts whether the meditator's consciousness passess from his physical body to these newly created bodies as in the case of mind-made body. It may be assumed so, as those bodies can perform different activities in the same way as the original physical body does. However, it is hard to consider these created bodies as being 'new personalities' of the meditator at that moment, as his physical body still functions as the main body in such exercise.

Other than creating a new body, in such miraculous exercise, the meditator may alter his physical body into a different form. For example,[643] the elder Devadatta once altered his body into that of a brahmin boy and went to see prince Ajātasattu.[644] In this case, there seems to be no transfer of consciousness as the meditator's physical body is still in function, even though its appearance has altered to a degree.

Elsewhere, it is recorded that the chief disciple of Sikhī Buddha, the elder Abhibhū, went to the Brahmā world and delivered a teaching to the Brahmā deities. During the teaching, his physical body was made visible, wholly

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[641] D.I.78. *eko pi hutvā bahudhā hoti, bahudhā pi hutvā eko hoti.*

[642] Buddhaghoṣa supports this idea by stating that, with this method, the meditator can create a large number of bodies similar to his original physical body. Vism.II.323-8.

[643] Vin.II.185.

[644] Vin.II.190.

invisible, or partly invisible on the upper or lower half of the body. And his voice could be heard from that realm as far away as in the human world.[645]

The body performing the various miracles mentioned above is mostly the physical body of the adept meditator. However, it seems that the quality of the physical body, at the stage of producing miracles, is adjusted to fit the exercise.

In the *Iddhipāda-saṃyutta*, the elder Ānanda asked the Buddha whether he used to approach to the Brahmā world by means of his psychic power with the mind-made body (*manomaya-kāya*), or with the physical body composed of the four great elements (*catummahābhūtika kāya*). The Buddha replied that he used to approach to the Brahmā world with both kinds of bodies.[646]

Then, the Buddha explains further how he could do that with his physical body. He concentrated the body in the mind and concentrated the mind in the body, diving into the perception of happiness (*sukhasaññā*) and the perception of lightness (*lahusaññā*). His body thus becomes lighter, softer, more workable, and more radiant; just like an iron ball, heated for a whole day, would become lighter, softer, more bendable, and more radiant. Also, with such a method, his body would soar from the earth to the sky without difficulty, just as light cotton-wool, once blown by the wind, would soar easily through the air. He then undergoes various kinds of miraculous exercises as far as the Brahmā world.[647]

This explanation suggests that, in the early Buddhist viewpoint, the qualities of the physical body can be changed through interactions between mind and body. Probably the process of mind-body interaction could be imagined as similar to that of diamond production, where the extreme heat and pressure hastens the re-structuring of the carbon arrangement. In a similar way, the structural arrangement of the four great elements constituting the physical body is

[645] S.I.156.

[646] S.V.282.

[647] S.V.283.

changed no doubt through the concentrated mind-power. In addition, the body which has been adjusted may have some influence on the environment. For example, this may be seen as similar to the process of magnetic induction in an iron bar where electricity has re-arranged the iron elements constituting the whole bar. Once it becomes magnetised, the bar, in its turn, can influence (attract) another iron bar.[648]

In some of the examples of miracles listed above, it seems that the structure of the physical body can be made more subtle, perhaps closer to that of the mind-made body of deities so that it can travel in the same manner as those deities do.[649]

In brief, this part has studied the body in relation to psychic power. It observed the difference of bodies created with supernormal power and of the mind-made body. Unlike the mind-made body which can be regarded as the meditator's new personality at the moment of meditator's full consciousness transferred into it, it is unlikely that the same can be said about bodies created by means of supernormal power. The study observes also the relationship of the meditator's physical body and miraculous power. It notes that the physical body, even though composed of the four great elements, can be made more subtle or can be adjusted with the power of *samādhi*. The adjusted physical body, in turn, may influence the environment with the power of *samādhi*.

In the following, the study will observe another notion of 'body' which is closer to the realisation.

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[648] Similarly, the physical body which has been adjusted through the mind-power seems also to influence the environment, perhaps by softening the earth that the body is diving in and out of, hardening the water on which the body is walking, or even cooling the sun it is touching. This, in a way, may be regarded also as the influence of the mind power on environment.

[649] For example, see A.I.64, S.V.294. Cf. M.II.79, S.I.147. Further details regarding bodies of deities in different realms will be studied below.

The Bodily Witness (*Kāyasakkhi*) & The Body That Witnesses *Dhamma*s

The term *kāyasakkhī* is the general title for an adept meditator whose experience is of the profoundest degree.[650] It is composed of *kāya* 'body' and *sakkhi* 'witness,' providing the meaning of the whole term as 'witness with body' or the 'bodily witness.' It signifies an individual who is dominant in the *samādhi* faculty,[651] among the three chief faculties[652] which lead to enlightenment. Pali *sutta*s usually explain that such a person 'touches with body'[653] various kinds of deliverances (*vimokkha*s),[654] i.e., he 'witnesses' them 'bodily.' The commentary defines the term *kāyasakkhi* as 'the person who "penetrates" or "sees with one's eye(s)" while touching.'[655]

Buddhist texts differ as regard the levels of noble state(s) belong to a 'bodily witness.' The *Kīṭāgiri-sutta* defines a 'bodily witness' (*kāyasakkhī*) as one who passes beyond the subtle deliverances (*vimokkha*s) of 'form,' and 'touch with body' the more subtle deliverances of the formless, as well as having *part of defilements* destroyed.[656] This accords with the description given in the *Puggala-vagga* of the *Aṅguttara-nikāya*, that a 'bodily witness' can mean any noble disciple from a Once-returner (*sakadāgāmī*) up to a farer toward Arhatship (*arahattāya paṭipanna*), who is skilled in *samādhi*.[657] Thus, a 'bodily witness' is understood in these texts as a learning noble one (*sekha-ariya-*

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[650] Collins, "The Body in Theravāda Buddhist Monasticism," op. cit., p. 196.

[651] *Imesaṃ āvuso tiṇṇaṃ puggalānaṃ yvāyaṃ puggalo kāyasakkhī ayaṃ me puggalo khamati imesaṃ tiṇṇaṃ puggalānaṃ abhikkantataro ca paṇītataro ca. Tam kissa hetu? Imassa āvuso puggalassa samādhindriyaṃ adhimattan ti.* A.I.119. Cf. also AK.VI.63a-c; Vasubandhu, Poussin, and Pruden, *Abhidharmakośa Bhāṣyam,* op. cit., p. 1016.

[652] These are confidence (*saddhā*), absorption (*samādhi*), and wisdom (*paññā*). A.I.119.

[653] This is generally described in Pali as '*kāyena phassitvā*' or '*kāyena phusitvā*.' M.I.33, M.I.477, S.II.123, A.II.87, A.III.356, A.IV.316.

[654] Deliverance (*vimokkha*) is defined in the Pali canon in various ways: mainly 'eight deliverances' (*aṭṭha-vimokkhā*) as mentioned in the older strata of the canon [D.II.70-71, 111-2, A.IV.306.], and 'three deliverances' (*tayo vimokkhā*) in the later. [Ps.II.35.]

[655] *Phuṭṭhantaṃ sacchi karotīti kāyasakkhi.* DA.III.889.

[656] '*ekacce āsavā parikkhīṇā honti*.' M.I.478.

[657] A.I.120. A Pali commentary specifies that a 'bodily witness' refers to a noble disciple in six levels from one established in the fruit of Stream-entry (*sotāpattiphalaṭṭha*) up to one established in the path of Arhatship (*arahattamaggaṭṭha*). DA.III.889.

puggala) who is yet to finish the course of practice to the level of the final goal.[658]

However, the meaning of 'bodily witness' given in another *sutta* of the *Aṅguttara-nikāya*[659] is slightly different. Here, a differentiation is made between individuals who are said to be bodily witnesses 'without qualification' (*nippariyāyena*) and 'with qualification' (*pariyāyena*). A meditator who touches any of the four *rūpa-jhāna*s or four *arūpa-jhāna*s with the body is said to be a 'bodily witness with qualification.' That means he/she is a bodily witness by conformation or by figurative language. Only the meditator who touches the cessation of perception and sensation (*saññāvedayitanirodha*) with the body, and *has defilements completely destroyed*,[660] is called a 'bodily witness without qualification' (*nippariyāyena*), or a 'literal bodily witness.' Hence, the *sutta* speficies that the true bodily witness means an Arhat who is of the profoundest level of meditative experience, whereas other noble disciples with such meditative proficiency are called 'bodily witnesses by conformation.' Therefore, the intended meaning of the term *kāyasakkhī* in this *sutta* is perhaps 'a person who witnesses cessation with the body.'

The *Paṭisambhidāmagga* elaborates the term '*kāyasakkhī*' in more detail and broaden the scope of its definition.[661] A person who attains any of noble states, from the path to the Stream-entry (*sotāpatti-magga*) to the fruit of Arhatship (*arahatta-phala*), with the *samādhi* faculty exceeding other faculties, is called the 'bodily witness.' Headed by the *samādhi* faculty, the other four faculties which are essential for enlightenment[662] become more powerful accordingly. It may be noted that, in this instance, the term 'bodily witness' (*kāyasakkhī*) covers all the eight noble states.

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[658] M.I.478, A.IV.77.

[659] A.IV.451-452.

[660] '*āsavā parikkhīṇā honti.*' A.IV. 452.

[661] Ps.II.54.

[662] These are confidence (*saddhā*), effort (*viriya*), mindfulness (*sati*), and wisdom (*paññā*).

The Sarvāstivāda school, however, defines the bodily witness exclusively as 'a Non-returner (*anāgāmī*) who has acquired the cessation (of perception and sensation),'[663] among the five types of Non-returners.[664]

The bodily witness is sometimes called *jhāyī* 'the meditator' who touches with the body the deathless realm (*amata-dhātu*),[665] which is free from attachment (*nirūpadhi*).[666] Also, sometimes he is called *samaṇapaduma* 'the red lotus *samaṇa*,' the category of monks highly praised as being superior in the second place from the Buddha,[667] and is one of the incomparable fields of merit (*anuttaraṃ puññakkhettaṃ*) for people who offer alms.[668]

To 'touch' or 'witness with body' is one mode of penetrating or realising the *dhamma*s, as proclaimed in the Pali canon. In the *Saṅgīti-sutta* of the *Dīgha-nikāya* and the *Yodhājīva-vagga* of the *Aṅguttara-nikāya*,[669] the Buddha mentions four kinds of *dhamma*s which must be penetrated with different qualities:

1) The *dhamma*s to be penetrated with body are the eight deliverances (*vimokkha*s).
2) The *dhamma* to be penetrated with mindfulness (sati) is the recollection of past lives (*pubbenivāsa*).
3) The *dhamma* to be penetrated with the eye is the death and rebirth of beings (*sattānaṃ cutūpapāta*).

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[663] *nirodhalābhy anāgāmī kāyasākṣī.* AK.VI.43c-d; Cf. Vasubandhu, Poussin, and Pruden, *Abhidharmakośa Bhāṣyam,* op. cit., p. 977.

[664] AK.VI.64c-d; Vasubandhu, Poussin, and Pruden, *Abhidharmakośa Bhāṣyam,* op. cit., p. 1019.

[665] A.III.356.

[666] It.46.

[667] A.II.87. In this instance, the Buddha is called *samaṇasukhumāla* 'the refined *samaṇa*,' praised in the highest place. The second, *samaṇapaduma* 'the red lotus samaṇa,' is the person whose defilements have been completely destroyed, and touches the deliverances (*vimokkha*s) with body. The third, *samaṇapuṇḍarīka* 'the white lotus *samaṇa*,' is the person whose defilements have been completely destroyed, but does not touch the deliverances (*vimokkha*s) bodily.

[668] D.III.105, D.III.253-254, A.IV.10, A.V.23.

[669] D.III.230, A.II.182-3.

4) The *dhamma* to be penetrated with wisdom is the destruction/exhaustion of defilements (*āsavānaṃ khaya*).

Among them, the eight deliverances (*vimokkha*s) are to be 'realised' (*sacchikaraṇīya*) with body. This coincides with the description of a 'bodily witness' (*kāyasakkhī*) as one who 'touches' (*phusati*) the eight deliverances with body. Here, to 'touch' the deliverances means to 'realise' or 'experience' them bodily. Thus, a bodily witness is one who has realised or penetrated the deliverances by 'touching' them 'with body.' Further question may be raised as to which kind of body is meant by the term '*kāya*' in '*kāyasakkhī*.' Information in the early text seems insufficient to determine this with certainty. At least, it is certain that *kāya* here refers to a kind of body that 'realises' both the various meditative states and the deathless realm (*amata-dhātu*).[670]

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[670] It may be interesting to observe a parallel passage in the Chinese *Dīrghāgama* (T13.I.0234b). Here, the whole *sūtra* corresponds to the Pali *Dasuttara-sutta*, but only this particular part seems to be taken from the *Saṅgīti-sutta*. The four kinds of *dhamma*s to be realised are mentioned briefly.

一法身當知。二法意當知。三法眼當知。四法慧當知。

This passage was translated by 'An Shih-kao,' the earliest translator of the Chinese *Āgama*s, around the year 148-170 A.D. From traditional Chinese viewpoint, the above four Chinese sentences should be translated as follows:

1. Should know (with) *dhamma-kāya*.
2. Should know (with) *dhamma-sati*.
3. Should know (with) *dhamma-cakkhu*.
4. Should know (with) *dhamma-paññā*.

Comparing this with the Pali *Saṅgīti-sutta* passage above, it can be understood that the phrase 'realised with the *kāya* (body)' is replaced with 'realised with the *dhamma-kāya*.' The same can be understood in other phrases, where '*sati*' '*cakkhu*' and '*paññā*' are put in Chinese as '*dhamma-sati*,' '*dhamma-cakkhu*,' and '*dhamma-paññā*.' Looking in this way, the Chinese *Āgama* seems to suggest that 'to touch the eight deliverances with body' means 'to touch them with the *dhammakāya*' (*dhamma*-body). This could probably be applicable also to the above statements of 'touching the deathless (*amataṃ dhātuṃ*) with the body' which should mean 'touching the deathless with the *dhammakāya*' and therefore the *dhammakāya* is 'the body that witnesses' those *dhamma*s.

However, it can be observed also that the word order in the Chinese passage is exactly the same as that in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* passage (A.II.182-183). The problem of translation is due to the absence of indication of different cases employed in the Chinese passage. Thus, if we try to reconstruct Pali passages from the word order presented in the Chinese translation, the result can be as follows, which gives different meaning from that translated directly from the traditional Chinese viewpoint:

1. *dhammā kāyena sacchikaraṇīyā*:	*dhamma*s (that) should be known with body (*kāya*).
2. *dhammā satiyā sacchikaraṇīyā*:	*dhamma*s (that) should be known with recollection (*sati*).
3. *dhammā cakkhunā sacchikaraṇīyā*:	*dhamma*s (that) should be known with eye (*cakkhu*).
4. *dhammā paññāya sacchikaraṇīyā*:	*dhamma*s (that) should be known with wisdom (*paññā*).

This observation may be interpreted in two different perspectives. On the one hand, it can be suspected that the Sanskrit or Prakrit original, from which the Chinese *Āgama*s were translated, gives exactly the same context as that in the Pali passage. This implies that the Chinese translation of the passage is misleading, and affirms that the Pali passage can be regarded as 'representative' of early texts, due to the high agreement among these original Indian texts. On the other hand, if the Chinese translation is correct, it can be understood that the early *Āgama*s interpret the 'body that witnesses *dhamma*s' as

Thus far, the study has observed various aspects of *kāya* in relation to a human being, both in the normal situation and in relation to different meditative states. The wide range of the term's usage varies from the coarse physical body to a subtle body arisen through a high degree of concentration, and from the whole to the smallest elements of the body. In any case, what is clear is its composite nature, the sense of functionality or activities and the inter-relation of its constituents, which is clearly different from the sense carried in the word 'collection.'

As was explained at the beginning of the chapter, the similarity of the two words 'collection' and 'body' lies in their composite structure that they can be reduced to individual elements or members. Their difference, however, can be observed from the dependence of individual members' function on the 'entirety' of the whole complex. In this regard, the meaning 'collection' represents independent type of functioning relation, while the translation 'body' represents a dependent type. This may be illustrated further as follows:

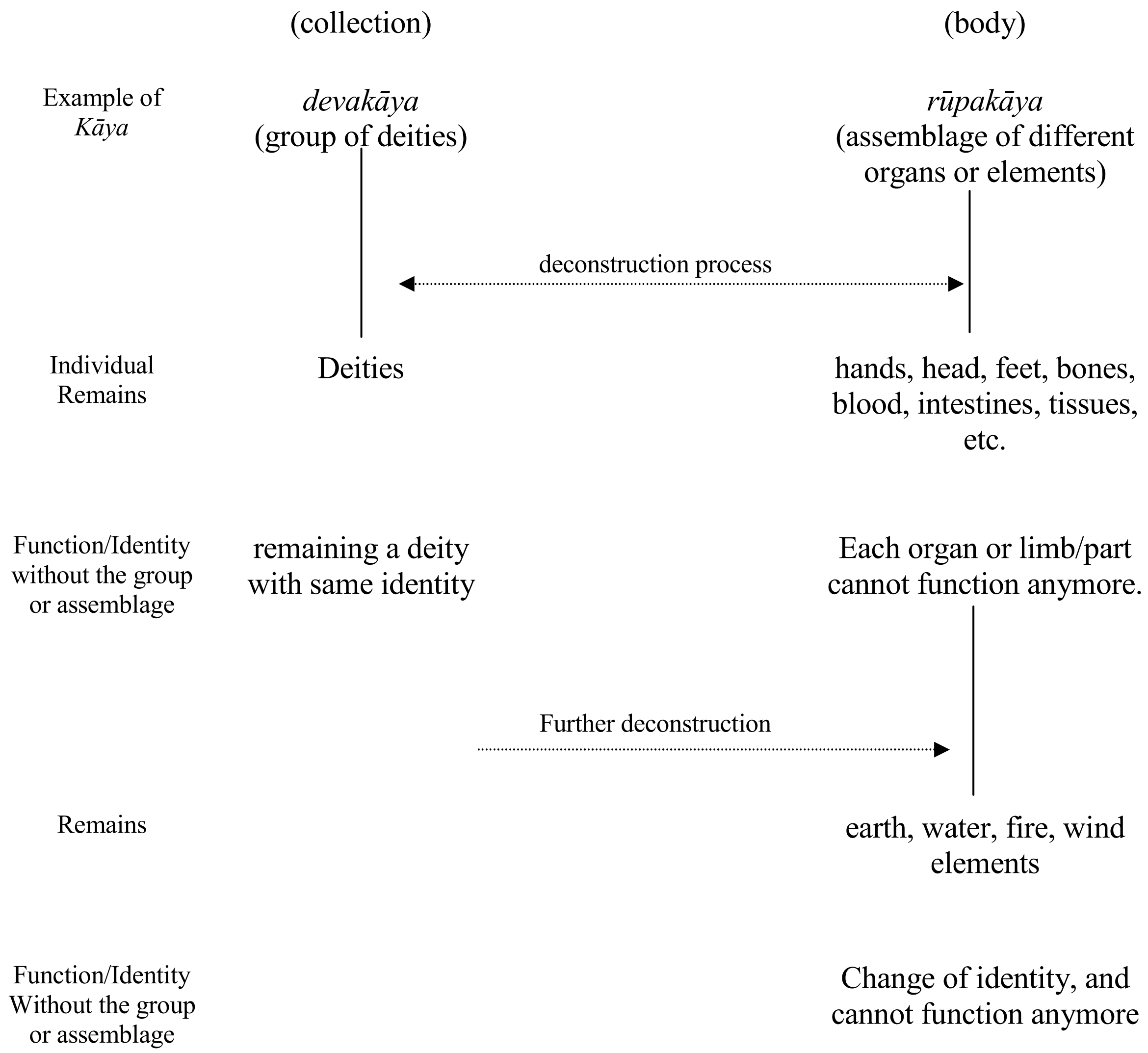
Illustration I: Comparison of the group or assemblage of dependent and independent types of relation

Type	Independent	Dependent

'*dhammakāya*.' From the latter perspective, *dhammakāya* thus refers to a kind of body, perhaps arisen in the highly concentrated state, by which a 'bodily witness' (*kāyasakkhī*) 'realises/touches' the deliverances and the deathless (*amata-dhātu*).

This observation can hardly be conclusive at this stage, given the obscure history of the early translation of the Chinese *Āgama*s. As is well-known, the Chinese translations were not made from Pali, but Sanskrit or Prakrit (most likely Gāndhārī) original. Only if the corresponding Sanskrit or Prakrit fragment is found and a comparison is made between two early texts, i.e., Pali and either Sanskrit or Prakrit originals, that this point can be concluded with higher degree of certainty.

For detailed discussion on traditional accounts regarding the 'body that witnesses the *dhamma*s,' see appendix II.



The above simple illustration demonstrates the difference between the dependent and independent types of relation between individual members and the sense of 'totality' of the whole complex. Of the independent type, individual members still retain their identity even without the group. This was illustrated with the example of a 'group of deities' (*devakāya*). Of the dependent type, however, each individual is unable to retain its/his/her function and identity in the absence of the 'totality.' This can be seen in the case of a physical body. Each physical organ can work in so far as its interaction with the whole body remains. Once it is cut off from the body, or once the body is no longer alive, its function and identity as an organ is immediately discontinued. This is the same in the case of *kāya* as for the whole five aggregates

(*pañcakhandhas*). All notions of *kāya* as different kinds of 'body' fall into this type of relation.

In the following section, the study will proceed to bodies of deities.

Bodies of Deities

According to Buddhist philosophy, besides humans and animals on earth, there are many kinds of other beings in different planes. This section deals with bodies of deities.

With respect to bodies of deities as distinguished from mind, the Pali canon provides a mass of relevant information. For example, in the *Brahmajāla-sutta*, the Buddha explains that the exhaustion of deities' minds and bodies results from mental opposition against each other:

> Te aññamaññamhi paduṭṭha-cittā kilanta-kāyā kilanta-cittā. Te devā tamhā kāyā cavanti. Te aññamaññamhi apaduṭṭha-cittā akilanta-kāyā akilanta-cittā. Te devā tamhā kāyā na cavanti...
>
> D.I.21
>
> They, who are offensive-minded against each other, become physically exhausted [and] mentally exhausted. Those deities (then) fall from that company. They, who are not offensive-minded against each other, are not exhausted-bodied, not exhausted-minded. Those deities do not shift from that company.

The separate mention of the minds and bodies of these deities affirms that their mind and body are distinct. Thus, not only human beings, but spiritual beings also possess body (*kāya*) as opposed to mind (*citta*). Nevertheless, this does not mean that their bodies will be of the same nature or qualities as those of human beings.

In some *suttas*,[671] the Buddha categorises the abodes of beings (*sattāvāsa*) within the cycle of rebirth (*saṃsāra*) into nine groups, i.e., seven supports of consciousness (*viññāṇaṭhiti*) and two spheres (*āyatana*). They are classed according to the diversity of body (*kāya*) and perception (*saññā*) as follows:

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[671] D.II.68-9, A.IV.401.

1. Beings with diverse bodies and diverse perceptions (*nānatta-kāyā nānatta-saññino*); this includes human beings, some sorts of deities in the six heavens pertaining to sensual pleasure (*kāmāvacara*), and some sorts of beings in the unfortunate realms (*vinipātika*).

2. Beings with diverse bodies but the same perception (*nānatta-kāyā ekatta-saññino*); these are Brahmā deities who were reborn of the first *jhāna*.[672]

3. Beings with the same bodies but diverse perception (*ekatta-kāyā nānatta-saññino*); this refers to the Ābhassara deities. They are reborn to this realm with the mind abiding in the second *jhāna*.[673]

4. Beings with the same bodies and the same perception (*ekatta-kāyā ekatta-saññino*); this phrase refers to the Subhakiṇha deities.[674]

5-7. Beings in the sphere of the infinite space (*ākāsānañcāyatanūpaga*), the sphere of infinite consciousness (*viññāṇañcāyatanūpaga*), and the sphere of nothingness (*ākiñcaññāyatanūpaga*) respectively.

8. Beings without perception (*asaññasatta*) and respectively.

9. Beings with neither existing nor non-existing perception (*neva-saññā-nāsaññāyatana*).

This classification and the brief descriptions provided in the canon affirm that, in realms other than that of human beings, other beings also possess body as

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[672] Buddhaghoṣa explains that these Brahmā beings possess bodies of different fineness, according to the quality of meditation attained; but their mind all abides in the first level of *jhāna*. Thus they have the same perception. He includes the rest of hell beings in this class, for all of them have merely the feel of suffering within those realms, as a consequence of their unwholesome deeds. DA.II.510

[673] A.II.126-8. The Pali *Abhidhamma* elaborates that there are two types of second *jhāna*: either with sustained thought (*savicāra*) or without it (*avicāra*); so beings in this realm are of two types of different perceptions according to the kinds of second *jhāna* they abide in. Dhs.236.

[674] All Subhakiṇha deities possess bodies of same qualities, more subtle and radiant than those of the Ābhassara deities. Because their minds all abide in the third *jhāna*, thus they have the same perception.

Commentarial traditions include also the Vehapphala deities in this class. They all abide in the fourth *jhāna*. The commentary to the *Dīgha-nikāya* includes Suddhāvāsa deities in this category [DA.II.511.], while another does not, for these deities are said to arise only when Buddhism arises. They do not arise at all times. DA.III.1046.

distinct from mind, as perception is one of mental elements that can represent the existence of mind to some extent.[675]

It may be noted that there is no mention of 'body' in the description of classes 5-9, mostly referring to the *arūpa*-Brahmā beings. Nevertheless, no mention is made either of a 'body' of 'beings without perception' (*asaññasatta*) who are known to possess 'body.' This suggests that 'the absence of statements regarding body' does not necessarily indicate 'the absence of body' of those beings.

Elsewhere, the Buddha is said to converse with Poṭṭhapāda regarding the acquisition of three kinds of self or personality:[676]

1. The coarse (*oḷārika*) self that possesses form, is made of the four great elements, and takes material food.[677]
2. The mind-made (*manomaya*) self that possesses form, is made by mind, complete in all limbs and parts, and not defective of any sense organs.[678]
3. The perception-made (*saññāmaya*) self that is formless.[679]

This *sutta* informs us of three kinds of self-acquisition (*attapaṭilābha*):[680] the coarse self made of the four great elements, the mind-made self, and the perception-made self. The aim of Buddhist teachings is to lead practitioners to pass beyond the acquisition of all these three kinds of self.[681] The sense of 'self acquisition' mentioned in the *sutta* sounds very close to the meaning of 'body' or 'personality.' It is likely that this refers to the acquisition of a new

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[675] *Saññā ca vedanā ca cetasikā ete dhammā cittapaṭibaddhā, tasmā saññā ca vedanā ca cittasaṅkhāro*. M.I.301.

[676] D.I.195.

[677] *Rūpī cātummahābhūtiko kabaliṅkārāhāra-bhakkho, ayaṃ oḷāriko atta-paṭilābho.*

[678] *Rūpī manomayo sabbaṅga-paccaṅgī ahīnindriyo, ayaṃ manomayo atta-paṭilābho.*

[679] *Katamo ca arūpo atta-paṭilābho? Arūpī saññāmayo, ayaṃ arūpo atta-paṭilābho.*

[680] Harvey translates this as 'mode of personality' [Harvey, "The Mind-Body Relationship in Pāli Buddhism," op. cit., p. 38.], while Woodward translates it as 'soul.' [T. W. Rhys Davids, *Dialogues of the Buddha*, vol. 1, Sacred Books of the Buddhists ; (London: Luzac, reprint, 1995), pp. 252-253.]

[681] D.I.196.

personality or new set of aggregates at the time of rebirth, after passing away from this life.

In the following, the study will continue on bodies of deities in three different realms, commencing from deities in the realms pertaining to sensual pleasure (*kāmāvacara*), and then *rūpāvacara* and *arūpāvacara* deities respectively.

Bodies of Deities in the Realms of Sensual Pleasure (*Kāmāvacara*)

Not only human beings possess coarse self, but *kāmāvacara* deities also do. Some Pali *sutta*s mention deities who take material food (*kabaliṅkārāhāra-bhakkha*).[682] This signifies deities in the six levels of heavenly realms, as they are described with the phrase '*dibbo rūpī kāmāvacaro kabaliṅkārāhāra-bhakkho*,' meaning 'divine, possessing form, pertaining to sensual pleasure, having material food.'[683] Although they are said to take material food, their food is different from the coarse food of humans, for the 'material food' they take is generally entitled *oja*:[684] 'the nutritive essence' that sustains the body. This nutritive essence is present also in the coarse food of humans, perhaps obtained through digestion, and works in sustaining the body.[685] To name it in terms of modern science, *oja* could be equated perhaps with the nutritive essence of vitamins and minerals. It is a reduced or refined form of material or, we might say, it is the subtle counterpart of coarse material food.

In many *sutta*s, the Buddha relates the events in which he undertook self-mortification. When he decided to cease ingesting food completely, many deities asked him to abandon that idea, otherwise they would infuse '*dibba oja*,' 'the divine nutrient,' through his skin[686] to sustain his body.[687] This, on the one hand, informs us of the materiality of *dibba oja*, that it can sustain the

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[682] A.III.194.

[683] D.I.34.

[684] D.II.285.

[685] A.III.396.

[686] *lomakūpa* = hair pores.

[687] For example, see M.I.245.

material human body. On the other hand, its subtlety is implied also, for it can be infused through the skin.

As the deities take this kind of material food, we may assume that their physical bodies are of the same nature. That is, they are made of material elements, but of a subtle nature that is not perceivable to the ordinary human senses. Although this kind of body is considered ‘material’ in the Buddhist sense, it does not appear ‘material’ as generally understood in other traditions. Therefore, in English usage, it may be considered ‘ethereal,’ due to its subtle nature.

Generally, this kind of body is perceivable only to an adept meditator, whose sense-faculties have been refined to the same level as those divine bodies' refinement. We are provided with some examples of these refined sense-faculties through certain Pali terms such as ‘*dibba cakkhu*’ (divine eye) or ‘*dibba sota*’ (divine ear), which arises through the power of the concentrated mind.[688] Some humans, even without meditation, possess such special senses as a karmic result of their previous meritorious deeds.[689] Moreover, the subtle physical bodies of deities can be made visible to humans through their divine power, if the deities so desire.[690] This, in a way, implies that the quality of the material elements constituting their physical bodies can be altered, in order to modify the quality of the whole body; perhaps in the same way as the human physical body is altered through supernatural power.

Although all deities in the *kāmāvacara* realms are said to possess (subtle) material bodies and to partake of a (fine) material food, it is evident in many *sutta*s that their bodies are of different degree of fineness, according to the planes of heaven they belong to.

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[688] For example, see Vin.I.228, D.II.20.

[689] For example, see D.II.176.

[690] For example, see Vin.I.38.

For example, in the *Kevaddha-sutta*, the Buddha narrates to Kevaddha that a monk travelled throughout the six planes of the *kāmāvacara* heavens and the first *rūpāvacara* realm, seeking someone capable of answering his question. With the power of his concentration, he approached the deities, starting from the lowest plane of the six levels, the Cātummahārājika realms. The deities in this realm could not answer his question but pointed him to the higher realm, the Tāvatiṃsa. And again, the deities in the Tāvatiṃsa heaven could not answer but pointed him to the higher Yāma heaven. In this manner, he was directed to the higher levels of heaven until he reached the realm of Mahābrahmā, who directed him to go back to his master, the Buddha.[691]

In directing the monk to meet deities in a higher realm, the expression employed is: 'Monk, there are deities called ... who are more glorious and more subtle than us. They should know this....'[692] It is clear from this statement that the bodies of deities in higher planes are more refined than those of the deities in lower planes.

It is evident also that even the deities in the same plane of the *kāmāvacara* heavens also possess bodies of different appearance, for they are categorised as '*nānattakāyā nānattasaññino*,' meaning 'beings different in body and in perception.'[693] The observation of *Yakṣa* Janavasabha, reported to the Buddha, affirms this point, that the deities in the same Tāvatiṃsa heaven possess bodies of different fineness, according to the merit they have accumulated during their life as human beings:

> Ye te bhante devā Bhagavati Brahmacariyaṃ caritvā adhunuppannā Tāvatiṃsakāyaṃ, te aññe deve atirocanti vaṇṇena c'eva yasasā ca.
>
> D.II.208.
>
> Lord, those deities who have practised religious life under the Blessed one, arisen recently to the company of Tāvatiṃsa deities, outshine other deities with appearance and glory.

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[691] D.I.215-220.

[692] *Atthi kho bhikkhu ... nāma devā amhehi abhikkantatarā ca paṇītatarā ca. Te kho evaṃ jāneyyuṃ ...*

[693] D.II.69.

It is clear from this evidence that the deities in the same Tāvatiṃsa realms are seen as differing in appearance. In addition, it informs us of the importance of merit accumulated for the well-being of deities, and affirms the importance of a human body as beneficial for the performance of such meritorious deeds.

Thus, it has been observed in this part that the *kāmāvacara* deities possess material form with different fineness. However, their bodies are still of composite nature, as they consist of different kinds of material elements.

Bodies of Deities in the Realms of Form-Meditation (*Rūpāvacara*)

Beyond the fine material bodies of the deities in the *kāmāvacara* realms are bodies belonging to deities in the higher *rūpajhāna*-related realms. Bodies of deities in these realms are generally referred to as 'mind-made bodies' (*manomaya-kāya*). This is the same expression applied to a kind of body that a human meditator can 'call up' at a state of highly concentrated mind, as discussed earlier. Among the two, the mind-made body of *rūpāvacara* deities is mentioned more frequently in the Pali canon, thus more information provided. This part concerns three aspects of the mind-made body of *rūpāvacara* deities: 1) subtlety, 2) personality, and 3) sustenance.

1) The subtlety of the mind-made body

The body of *rūpāvacara* deities is different from that of the *kāmāvacara* deities. It is more subtle than the fine material body of *kāmāvacara* deities and can be perceivable to humans and *kāmāvacara* deities only in the same manner as is the body of *kāmāvacara* deities to human beings, i.e., through special sensory perception or by the alteration of the body itself.

For example, whenever the Brahmā Sanaṅkumāra comes to deliver *dhamma* teaching to deities assembling in the Sudhamma hall of the Tāvatiṃsa heaven, he has to create a coarse body that is visible to them.[694] But for humans who

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[694] D.II.210.

possess extrasensory perception arising from the power of *samādhi*, this kind of body is visible without any alteration. As is evident in various *sutta*s, deities possessing such body come to visit the Buddha[695] or his disciples[696] with their un-altered bodies.

Owing to its subtlety, it seems that this body cannot simply stand on earth; unless the earth or the body is modified to be of the same fineness. This is evident in the case of the deity Hatthaka who came to visit the Buddha after his recent rebirth in the mind-made body. He could not stand in front of the Buddha with that body, as his body had sunk into the earth. Upon seeing this, the Buddha told him to create a coarse body; and following this instruction, Hatthaka was then able to stand on earth.[697]

b) The personality of beings of mind-made bodies

As to the personality of beings of mind-made bodies, the most frequently mentioned expression found in the canon is that regards the personality of Ābhassara deities (deities in the second *jhāna* level). They are said to be 'mind-made, fed on joy, self-radiating, travelling in the air, remaining glorious, and lasting for an immeasurably long time.'[698]

The personality of the Brahmā deities in the lower plane (the first *jhāna* realms) is described also with exactly this same phrase.[699] However, we are informed also about the differences regarding their life-span (however long), their power, and the degree of delicacy of their bodily appearance.[700]

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[695] For example, see D.II.253-255, A.III.50-51.

[696] For example, see Vin.II.185-6.

[697] A.I.279. It may be interesting to research further regarding the reason why Hatthaka's mind-made body cannot simply stand on earth. It could be because the body is still under the influence of gravity. Or it can be because Hatthaka was still familiar with his previous human body, as he was just reborn recently into such a mind-made body. Perhaps the former is less likely as the body was first travel in the air before coming to visit the Buddha. (Thanks to Dr Edward F. Crangle, my supervisor, who elicits this idea.)

[698] *manomayā pīti-bhakkhā sayaṃpabhā antalikkha-carā subhaṭṭhāyino, cīraṃ dīghaṃ addhānaṃ tiṭṭhanti*. D.I.17.

[699] D.I.17.

[700] *Tatra, bhikkhave, yo so satto paṭhamaṃ upapanno so dīghāyukataro ca hoti vaṇṇavantataro ca mahesakkhataro ca. Ye pana te sattā pacchā upapannā te appāyukatarā ca honti dubbaṇṇatarā ca appesakkhatarā ca.* = 'Monks, there the being

There is no detailed description regarding the personality of *rūpāvacara* deities in higher planes, i.e., the third *jhāna* level (Subhakiṇha) and the fourth (Vehapphala) in the Pali canon. Nevertheless, there is some indication that the bodies of these deities, including that of the Suddhāvāsa deities who are Non-returners (*anāgāmī*), are of the same kind (mind-made) but perhaps with a different degree of subtlety.

It is said in the *Āghāta-vagga* of the *Anguttara-nikāya*: a practitioner who is endowed with virtue, concentration, and wisdom, would either attain or emerge from the cessation of perception and sensation (*saññāvedayitanirodha*).[701] It is probable for him to pass beyond the companionship of deities who take material food (*kabaliṃkārāhāra-bhakkha deva*),[702] and to arise in the mind-made body.[703] The mention of the attainment of the cessation of perception and sensation implies that the practitioner's state is that of a Non-returner (*anāgāmī*), at least. Accordingly, he is anticipated to be reborn in one of the five Suddhāvāsa realms, if he could not attain the highest goal in this life time. These deities are reborn with the power of the transcendental fourth *jhāna* (*lokuttara-jhāna*),[704] which is more consistent than the mundane (*lokiya-jhāna*) that is still subject to retrogression. Therefore, the deities reborn in the realm corresponding to the four *rūpa-jhāna*s, either mundane or transcendental, possess the mind-made bodies.[705]

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who was reborn first has longer life-span; possesses better look and more power. The beings who were reborn later have shorter life-span; possess worse look and less power.' D.I.18.

[701] *sīlasampanno, samādhisampanno, paññāsampanno saññāvedayitanirodhaṃ samāpajjeyya pi vuṭṭhaheyya pi…*

[702] This means *kāmāvacara* deities, mentioned earlier.

[703] A.III.194.

[704] Due to the permanent destruction of some cankers, a non-returner's *jhāna* is associated with his purified 'transcendental mind' (*lokuttara citta*). As such the *jhāna* is entitled 'transcendental *jhāna*' which is more consistent and of better qualities than that of mundane meditators.

[705] Falk, asserting her pre-canonical reconstruction of Buddhist viewpoint based on Vedic and *Upaniṣadic* literature, states that the mind-made body is originally rendered in *arūpadhātu* and is altered by later text to *rūpadhātu*. This raises a certain difficulty.

Much of the difficulty seems to be a consequence of the different usage of the same term in different traditions. Fixing her thought on the scheme of Vedic and *Upaniṣadic* texts, identifying it as 'ancient Buddhist notion,' Falk renders *rūpadhātu* to be the world of physical matter, i.e., Buddhist *kāmāvacara* realm; and identifies Buddhist *rūpadhātu* with *arūpadhātu*. Falk, *Nāma-Rūpa and Dharma-Rūpa*, op. cit., pp. 97-106.

When coming to the human world, these mind-made bodies are usually said to be of big size,[706] brilliant, and brightening up the environment.[707]

c) The sustentation of the mind-made body

As these deities are more subtle than the *kāmāvacara* deities, they do not need material food, however fine, to sustain their mind-made bodies. This is obvious from the classification of beings, mentioned earlier, where they are not classed as deities who take material food. As to the question of what kind of food they take, we shall look at the description of these deities.

In the Pali canon, we see the Pali term '*pītibhakkhā*,' which is used generally in describing the Ābhassara deities (abiding in the second *jhāna*) and the Brahmā deities of the lower plane (abiding in the first *jhāna*). It means 'fed on joy' or 'having joy as food.' This indicates a subtle kind of nourishment for their bodies.

As joy (*pīti*) is a constituent of the first and second *jhāna*s, and as *rūpāvacara* deities all abide in the *jhāna*s, we may assume that the mind-made body of these *rūpāvacara* deities is sustained with *jhāna* constituents. Therefore, for the higher *rūpāvacara* deities who abide in the third (Subhakiṇha deities) and fourth *jhāna*s (Vehapphala deities), where joy (*pīti*) is not present, we may expect that their mind-made body should be sustained with some other mental factors present in those *jhāna*s, such as happiness (*sukha*). The descriptions of human meditators' experience in the four *jhāna*s, as stated below, support this assumption.

It is explained generally that, the whole body of the practitioner in the first and second *jhāna*s is suffused with joy and happiness, whereas the body abiding in the third and fourth *jhāna*s is filled respectively with happiness divested of joy (*nippītika sukha*), and also filled with the pure and bright mind (*parisuddha*

[706] For example, see Vin.II.185.

[707] For example, see A.I.278.

ceta pariyodāta).[708] Although this is the description of meditative experience of a human being, it should apply to *rūpāvacara* deities as well, for they are abiding in the same four *jhāna*s.

The mention of joy (*pīti*) and happiness (*sukha*) suffusing the body in the first and second *jhāna*s matches the claim that the mind-made body of deities in the first and second *jhāna* levels are 'fed on joy' (*pīti-bhakkha*). Thus, it is most probable that deities in the higher levels of *jhānas* should be fed also on the corresponding *jhāna* constituents.

Agreeing with the Pali *sutta*s that say that all beings have to subsist on 'food,'[709] four categories of food are said to sustain beings already reborn, or to support the beings who are seeking rebirth (*sambhavesī*):[710]

1. Material food, either coarse or fine (*kabaliṃkāro āhāro oḷāriko vā sukhumo vā*)
2. Food that is contact (*phassa* or *phassāhāra*)
3. Food that is mental intention (*manosañcetanā* or *manosañcetanāhāra*)
4. Food that is consciousness (*viññāṇa* or *viññāṇāhāra*)

These four kinds of 'food' are said to sustain those beings in different manners. Only material food is 'eaten,' whereas the other kinds of 'food' merely function as sustaining factors, on which the continuation of their existence is based, in one way or another. This is evident in the *Phagguna-sutta*. Upon hearing of the discourse regarding four classes of food, the elder Moliya-Phagguna asked the Buddha who 'eats' consciousness (*viññāṇa*). The Buddha considered the question as misconstrued, for he did not say that the 'food that is consciousness' (*viññāṇāhāra*) is to be eaten. So the Buddha himself rephrased the question: What is 'the food that is consciousness' for? The answer is that it

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[708] For example, see M.I.276-278.

[709] *Sabbe sattā āhāraṭṭhitikā*. D.III.211, A.V.55.

[710] *Cattārome bhikkhave āhārā bhūtānaṃ vā sattānaṃ ṭhitiyā sambhavesīnam vā anuggahāya*. For example, see S.II.13.

is a factor for the arising of the being in a new realm.[711] In other words, it maintains the continuation of the beings in various realms within the cycle of rebirth.

The mention of 'food that is contact' (*phassāhāra*) agrees with the statement that the meditator 'touches with the body' the four *rūpa-jhāna*s, four *arūpa-jhāna*s, the cessation of perception and sensation (*saññāvedayitanirodha*),[712] or even the deathless realm (*amata dhātu*).[713] It also agrees with the statements that the *jhāna* constituents suffuse the body of the meditator in *jhāna* states. Therefore, it is likely that the 'food that is contact' (*phassāhāra*) plays an important role in deep meditation. [714]

In the case of *rūpāvacara* deities, as their mind-made body (*manomaya kāya*) is more subtle than that of *kāmāvacara* deities, they do not need material food at all. As they are *jhāna*-abiding beings, whose minds always abide in the *jhāna*s, the sustenance of their 'bodies' depends mainly on 'food that is contact.' The 'contact' that sustains their mind-made bodies is, as discussed above, the contact of the *jhāna* constituents that suffuse the body.

In this part, we have observed the characteristics of the mind-made body of *rūpāvacara* deities, which is more or less similar to that of the mind-made body in human meditators. This body is more refined than that of *kāmāvacara* deities. Nevertheless, its composite nature is still observed and the activities involved render it appropriate for the expression 'body.' This body is likely to subsist on the corresponding *jhāna* constituents which can be regarded as 'food

[711] S.II.13.

[712] A.IV.451-452.

[713] A.III.356.

[714] While playing an important part in meditative states as 'contact of the *jhāna* constituents,' 'food that is contact' (*phassāhār*a) could also refer to 'contact through the 5 senses' that helps sustain the physical body in its normal state. For example, people have hunger to sustain their sense-experience.

that is contact' (*phassāhāra*) suffusing the whole body. This may apply also to the mind-made body of a human meditator.[715]

The study will now turn to the perception-made self of *arūpāvacara* deities, the beings in the realms higher than that of *rūpāvacara* deities .

Bodies of Deities in the Realms of Formless-Meditation (*Arūpāvacara*)

More subtle than the mind-made body are the beings usually described as '*arūpī saññāmayā*,' meaning 'formless, perception-made.'

Similar to the description *rūpī* of the mind-made body, the description *arūpī* of the perception-made (*saññāmaya*) self could be translated in two different ways, i.e., 'pertaining to *arūpadhātu*' or 'formless.' There is no doubt regarding the former translation, for these beings are reborn to these realms with their mind abiding in *arūpajhāna* or *arūpasaññā* (perception in the formless), and then they are *arūpāvacara* deities. The description as perception-made (*saññāmaya*) is also clear, for their *arūpajhāna* arise from meditation on different kinds of perception (*saññā*). Thus, it should be translated as 'the self made by perception' or 'the self that arises according to

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[715] As to the sustenance of the mind-made body of a human meditator, even though there is no direct mention in the canon, it may be understood in a similar way that this mind-made body subsists on the contact with the *jhāna* constituents, similar to that of *rūpāvacara* deities. Also, as far as the meditator abides in a deep state of meditation, such a sustaining factor, or at least its influence, could be passed on also from the mind-made body to the physical body of the meditator, through mind-body interaction. This is evident from the claim that the adept meditator 'touches with the body' different kinds of *jhāna*s, the cessation [A.IV.451-452], or the deathless. A.III.356. In 'the cessation of perception and sensation' (*saññāvedayita-nirodha*), even though there is said to be absence of sense contact (*phassa*), the mention of 'touching cessation with the body' in the canon suggests that there could still be 'contact of the *jhāna* constituent' of some kinds, and thus also the 'food that is contact' which helps sustain the body during the period of abiding in the deep meditative state.

As with the earlier discussion of 'food that is consciousness' (*viññāṇāhāra*), the meditator does not 'eat' the contact, and he does not 'touch' those *jhāna* states by means of physical sensation, as the meditative states are profoundly more subtle than the condition of the physical body. But the contact could serve in some way to sustain his subtle/mental body, as such contact affects also the physical body through the interconnection of body and mind. As is evident in the canon, sometimes the Buddha or his disciples are said to have spent week(s) or even month(s) in deep meditation, or in the state of cessation (*nirodhasamāpatti*), without any material food. For example, as recorded at Vin.I.2-3, the Buddha did not take material food for 7 weeks (49 days). Also, in that state of cessation, the practitioner is said to have 'purified faculties' (*vippasannāni indriyāni*). M.I.296, S.IV.294. Such a description does not mean merely the pure sense-faculties, but also means his whole bodily appearance. This is obvious from the question Buddhist monks usually ask each other: "your faculties look bright and clear, your face looks pure and bright, today in which state are you dwelling?" For example, see S.II.275, S.III.2, S.III.236. Clearly, to dwell in those states of *samādhi* must also have a considerable impact on the physical body. Thus, apart from 'a residual metabolism' that 'keeps the body alive for seven days' [Harvey, "The Mind-Body Relationship in Pali Buddhism," op. cit., p. 38.], the role in sustaining the human physical body could have been transferred, from the material food that sustains the physical body in an ordinary state, to contact (*phassāhāra*) of the *jhāna* constituents. Heuristically, this role can be transferred back to material food again when the meditator emerges from that state to the normal situation which involves physical activities.

perception,' in the same way as is *manomaya-kāya* translated as 'the body made by mind.'[716]

As to the translation of *arūpī* as formless, it seems that this kind of being should be invisible, for it is said to possess no form. Nevertheless, it is more likely that this being is visible or perceivable through some kind of extrasensory or inner seeing or perception; as some ascetics declare, *Taṃ ahaṃ jānāmi passāmi* 'I know and see (this being).'[717]

It might be argued that such a statement is the declaration of non-Buddhist ascetics, so it does not mean that the early Buddhists accept the existence of what those ascetics claim as see and know. However, we should note that most ascetics in the ancient Indian traditions are meditators; they made their claims according to their knowledge and vision (*ñāṇa-dassana*). Only some ascetics are thinkers and make claims according solely to their reasoning. The Buddha does not reject the proclamation of those seers as a lie. Also, he does not reject what they claim as not existing. What the Buddha says is that such instances of knowledge and vision are imperfect, according to their different ability in knowing and seeing. Generally, they do not know and see its overall picture, but only part of its existence; so they make imperfect claims accordingly. For example, some ascetics see only the continuous rising of beings without seeing that they constantly change; thus they proclaim *sassatadiṭṭhi* 'eternalism.'[718] Some see only the death of some beings but do not see the continuity to another

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[716] Similar to the case of the mind-made body, the word '*saññāmaya*' can be translated either as 'made of perception' or 'made by perception.' The former translation conveys the meaning that this 'self' or 'personality' is constituted with 'perception,' while the latter gives the meaning that this self is made with the influence of perception. While both translations may be equally possible, the information provided in the canon seems insufficient to determine the exact constituents of this kind of personality. Thus the former translation can hardly be conclusive. In contrast, as the emergence of this body is associated with the attainment of formless-meditation, which employs different kinds of perception as meditative object, it is certain that this *arūpajhāna*s and the corresponding 'personality' emerge by the influence of perception. Thus, the latter translation, 'made by perception' can hardly be incorrect. For this reason, this study employs the translation 'made by perception' for the word '*saññāmaya*.' In addition, the former translation, 'made of perception,' seems inappropriate, considering that this *arūpāvacara* beings are not composed of only 'perception' (*saññā*) but it possesses also other mental factors, at least '*viññāṇa*'- consciousness.

Pali commentary supports our decision, saying "*saññāmayāti arūpajjhānasaññāya saññāmayā*" = 'perception-made' means made by *arūpa-jhāna* perception.' MA.III.122.

[717] For example, see D.I.35.

[718] For example, see D.I.13-22.

life, so they proclaim *ucchedadiṭṭhi* 'nihilism.'[719] The Buddha declares that he knows and sees what they see and know, as well as what is beyond their knowledge and vision.[720] Therefore, he refuses their viewpoints which arise from such imperfect cognition, but it does not preclude the existence of what they declare as knowing and seeing.

The classification of these beings into categories 5-7 and 9 of the nine existences mentioned earlier, or the classification of it in different manners,[721] clarifies that the Buddha knows these beings well. It indicates that they are visible or at least 'perceivable' through the Buddha's extrasensory perception, for Buddhist teaching is not a mere matter of thought or imagination; it comes out from 'knowing and seeing' (*ñāṇa-dassana*) through the personal meditative experience of the teacher. Moreover, some *sutta*s suggest that, at that time, such beings are known generally to Buddhists[722] and non-Buddhists alike.[723]

Regarding the obscurity of the distinctiveness between the mind and body of these beings, noted earlier, whether they possess a body distinguishable from mind as do other deities, it is perhaps useful to look at a conversation between the Buddha and Poṭṭhapāda, a non-Buddhist mendicant.

In the *Poṭṭhapāda-sutta*, Poṭṭhapāda puts a number of questions to the Buddha. One of them concerns self (*attā*) and perception (*saññā*), whether they are the same thing or two different things. The Buddha puts a question in return as to which self is meant here. Once Poṭṭhapāda mentions the coarse self, the Buddha then replies as follows:

> Tiṭṭhat' evāyaṃ Poṭṭhapāda oḷāriko attā rūpī cātummahābhūtiko kabaliṅkārāhāra-bhakkho, atha imassa purisassa aññā va saññā uppajjanti, aññā va saññā nirujjanti. Iminā pi kho etaṃ Poṭṭhapāda pariyāyena veditabbaṃ, yathā aññā va saññā bhavissati, añño attā ti.

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[719] For example, see D.I.33-35.

[720] *Tañ ca Tathāgato pajānāti, tato ca uttaritaraṃ pajānāti*. D.I.36.

[721] D.I.195.

[722] For example, see A.III.194.

[723] For example , see D.I.185-187.

D.I.186.

> Poṭṭhapāda, staying is this coarse self, possessing form, made up of the four great elements, having material food. But a perception arises to this man; another perception ceases. It should be understood in this manner, Poṭṭhapāda, that perception will be one thing, self will be another.

Here, the reason given to distinguish the 'self' from 'perception' is that, the self remains while one perception arises and another perception ceases. The same answer is given when Poṭṭhapāda refers to two other kinds of self: the mind-made (*manomaya*) and the perception-made (*saññāmaya*) selves.

From Poṭṭhapāda's question, the 'self' (*attā*) refers to different kinds of body or personality. In the Buddha's reply, such a 'self' is distinguished from mind, which is represented here by perception (*saññā*), a mental element. The mention that the 'self' or 'body' remains while perception ceases and arises does not mean to point to any kind of 'eternal' or 'enduring self.' Rather, it is a mere contrast of the longer duration of 'body' as distinct from 'mind' which ceases and arises more frequently. Such a comparison is made elsewhere that a physical body, made up of the four great elements, can last for years or even up to a hundred years while the mind (*citta*, *mana*) or consciousness (*viññāṇa*) arises and ceases whole day and whole night.[724] The Buddha's reply to Poṭṭhapāda, that the 'perception-made (*saññāmaya*) self' remains while perception (*saññā*) arises and ceases, indicates that the 'perception-made self' is regarded as a kind of 'body' as distinguished from 'mind.' Thus *arūpāvacara* deities, although said to be formless, seem to possess a kind of body as opposed to mind.

Regarding which kind of body they possess, the question and answer in the *Kevaddha-sutta*, as well as various descriptions of *nibbāna*, provide us with a clue. According to the *sutta*, the Buddha converses with a monk concerning the presence of the four great elements. The monk asks: "Where do the four great

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[724] S.II.94-95.

elements cease without trace?" The Buddha considered his question as incorrectly constructed, and then rephrased it as follows:

1. Where do water, earth, fire, and wind (the four great elements) find no footing (cannot stand)?
2. Where do the long, short, fine, coarse, beautiful, and ugly (the derived forms) find no footing?
3. Where do the name and form (*nāma* and *rūpa*) cease, leaving no trace behind.

The answer given was "in the consciousness (*viññāṇa*) that is non-demonstrable, endless, luminous all around; the nature where the four great elements find no footing, where name and form either long, short, fine, coarse, beautiful, or ugly cease without trace by means of the cessation of consciousness."[725] This is likely to be the description of *Nibbāna*, for it resembles another reference to *Nibbāna* which describes it as the nature where the four great elements have no footing, the cycle of rebirth does not go on, *nāma* and *rūpa* cease without trace, the arrow turns back.[726] It is where there is no star, sun, moon, or darkness.[727] The description of *Nibbāna* in such a way implies that, in realms other than in *Nibbāna*, there are still the four great elements. As the four great elements are present everywhere apart from *Nibbāna*, it may be assumed that they are also present in *arūpadhātu*.

Elsewhere, we find that the Buddha's sermon given to the villagers in the *Apaṇṇaka-sutta* indicates the general view of the time. It is related that a person 'who does not see and does not know exactly the nature of things' would think that, 'in such an immaterial world (*arūpadhātu*), there is no fighting, dispute, or

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[725] *Viññāṇaṃ anidassanaṃ anantaṃ sabbatopahaṃ*
Ettha āpo ca paṭhavī tejo vāyo na gādhati
Ettha dīghañca rassañca aṇuṃ thūlaṃ subhāsubhaṃ
Ettha nāmañca rūpañca asesaṃ uparujjhati
Viññāṇassa nirodhena etthetaṃ uparujjhatīti. D.I.223.

[726] S.I.15.

[727] Ud.9.

any other bad conduct, either physical or verbal, for material reasons.' So he trains his mind to go apart from *rūpa*.' [728] Although this is the general view of the people of the time, it represents the view of a person who does not have 'knowledge and vision' (*ñāṇadassana*), as the *sutta* explains. Therefore, this does not preclude the possible existence of the four great elements in *arūpa-loka* implied by the Buddha's answer in *Kevaddha-sutta*. Indeed, in a realm where materiality is present, it is not necessary that there must be always 'fighting, dispute, or bad conduct for material reasons.' Such bad conduct is due to 'defilements' (*āsava*) rather than because of the 'materiality' (*rūpa*). Thus, if the four great elements exist in the *arūpāvacara* sphere, the 'self,' as distinguished from mind, of the *arūpāvacara* deities could also be composed of the four great elements.

Nevertheless, it may be noted that, this kind of 'self' has never been called 'body' in the canon, and there is no clear evidence of their activities being like those of other deities.[729] This suggests that those elements, if actually present therein, must be present in an even more subtle and purer form than that composing the mind-made body. Otherwise, it could be merely a trace of extreme subtlety, that the four great elements could be said to be 'neither present nor not-present.' Thus, it gives way to disagreement among traditions, as recorded in the scriptures of mainstream Buddhist schools.

Traditional Theravāda refuses the presence of the four great elements in the formless realms. Pali *Abhidhamma* and commentaries describe the *arūpa* realms as having only the last four aggregates (*catuvokāra-bhava*),[730] that is, they are without the first aggregate - *rūpa* (*form*). They claim that these beings

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[728] *rūpādhikaraṇaṃ daṇḍādāna-satthādāna-kalaha-viggaha-vivāda-tuvaṃtuvapesuñña-musāvādā, na-tthi kho pan' etaṃ sabbaso arūpe.* M.I.410.

[729] It is generally explained in the Pali commentaries that in some special events, deities from all ten thousand world systems assembled, or appear to human world except deities in *arūpa* world. SnA.I.359, JA.I.19, ApA.21, ItA.I.133.

[730] Vbh.406-407. Cf. ItA.II.3, MA.IV.106. The last four aggregates are *vedanā* (sensation), *saññā* (perception), *saṅkhāra* (volitional formation), and *viññāṇa* (consciousness).

are endowed with knowledge but with no eye (*ñāṇasampayuttā acakkhukā*),[731] for they possess only mind but not body. As Harvey states: "The 'beings' of such a level are clearly seen as totally bodiless."[732] In other words, they possess only mentality (*nāma*) and not materiality (*rūpa*).

Indeed, the Pali commentaries record also that some other schools claim the presence of physical matter '*rūpa*' even in the *arūpāvacara* world,[733] and some specify that only subtle matter (*sukhuma-rūpa*) is present;[734] but the Theravāda Pali commentaries refuse these claims.

Likewise, the Sarvāstivāda *Abhidharmakośa* states: "They (the *Ārūpyas*) are made up of four *skandhas*,"[735] that "The *Ārūpyas* are accompanied by only four *skandhas*, for no *rūpa* or physical matter accompanies it,"[736] and "There is no *rūpa* in the *Ārūpyas*."[737] However, the *Abhidharmakośa* itself also records the different views of some schools. Some claim that 'there is some physical matter, *rūpa*, in the *Ārūpya*s' but they are called as such because "their *rūpa* is reduced in the same way that a little red (*īṣatpiṅgala*) is called 'reddish' (*āpiṅgala* 'absence of red')."[738] The Sarvāstivāda school refutes this claim by citing the *sutta*s: "One departs from the *rūpas* through the *Ārūpyas*… [t]hese states of calm deliverance, beyond the *rūpas*, namely the *Ārūpyas*," and so on.

However, in these quotes, it is possible that '*rūpa*s' means '*rūpāvacara* realms' or 'states,' rather than 'materiality' as the Sarvāstivādin asserts. Even in the

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[731] Ym.III.115, Yth.II.117. Cf. PPA.105.

[732] Harvey, "The Mind-Body Relationship in Pāli Buddhism," op. cit., p. 38.

[733] For example, see MA.IV.20. In this instance, Buddhaghoṣa calls people who make this claim with the term *Vitaṇḍavādī* 'the sophist.' This seems to be **a** reference to members of the Srilankan Abhayagiri-vihāra monastery.

[734] PPA.110. Here, Buddhaghoṣa refers to the traditions who make this claim are called *Andhaka*s, 'the blinds.' It is evident that Buddhaghoṣa, whilst writing up the Pali commentaries, made use of many older *aṭṭhakathā* including that of the *Andhakas*; but he refuted some points of their claims that did not agree with the position of the Mahāvihāravāsins. Elsewhere, it is clarified that '*andhaka*' means the schools of Sammatīya [PPA.68, 69,163.], Mahisāsaka [PPA.61.], and in some cases Mahāsaṃghika. PPT.95.

[735] AK.VIII.2d. Cf. Vasubandhu, Poussin, and Pruden, *Abhidharmakośa Bhāṣyam,* op. cit., p. 1219.

[736] Ibid., p. 1220.

[737] Ibid., p. 1221.

[738] Ibid. For the discussion between traditions that possess different views, see pp. 1219-1226.

case that the '*rūpa*s' in the former quote can mean 'physical matter,' it seems to relate the '*Ārūpya*s' to the meditative states that employ formless meditative object; perhaps only the object that the mind is focusing on is formless, not the realm itself.

Regarding the food of the *arūpāvacara* deities, as they also abide in *arūpa-jhāna* in the same way as the mind-made deities abide in *rūpa-jhāna*, it is most likely that their bodies are sustained mainly by 'contact' with the *jhāna* constituents. The Theravāda Pali *Abhidhamma* agrees with this, stating that they are sustained by three kinds of food, excluding material food. Because the last two kinds of food (*manosañcetanāhāra* and *viññāṇāhāra*) are meant to support the continuation to the new birth, the main food of these *arūpāvacara* deities during their abiding in these realms is thus contact (*phassāhāra*).

The study in this part has observed that all deities possess 'body' or 'self' as distinct from mind. Deities in different realms possess different kinds of bodies. All kinds of bodies are composed of the four great elements of different degrees of refinement or merely their trace; they might even be without any or all of these elements. However, as these bodies are invisible to ordinary human beings, all of them could be called 'ethereal,' 'immaterial,' or even 'spiritual' bodies. In any case, these bodies are visible or perceivable in one way or another; they can be visible to extrasensory perception, or to beings of the same degree of subtlety.

The next section will address another usage of the term *kāya*. Rather than referring to only 'body as distinguished from mind,' it refers to the 'whole being comprising both mind and body.'

Kāya as Totality, Signifying 'Life' as a Whole

Besides its usage as a collection and various aspects of the body, the term *kāya* is employed in the Pali canon also in the sense of totality, referring to 'life' or

personality as a whole. This is usually found when death and rebirth are mentioned. For example, in the Vinaya text, a happy rebirth is mentioned:

> Sīlavā sīlasampanno kāyassa bhedā paraṃ maraṇā sugatiṃ saggaṃ lokaṃ upapajjati.
>
> Vin.I.228.
>
> A person who has virtue, endowed with virtues,[739] after death, from the breaking up of the body, is reborn to a heaven – the happy realm.

In the same text, an opposite example is also given saying that a person whose *sīla* is destroyed, and who is endowed with immoral conduct, is reborn suffering in a realm of morally undeveloped beings after death.[740]

Another example of the rebirth of non-human beings is present in the *Cullavagga* of the *Vinaya*. In this instance, the Buddha tells a story of three animals - a partridge, a monkey, and an elephant - in order to provide his monks with a good example of living in harmony and respect toward each other. The Pali passage reads:

> atha kho bhikkhave tittiro makkaṭañ ca hatthināgañ ca pañcasu sīlesu samādapesi attanā ca pañcasu sīlesu samādāya vattati. te aññamaññaṃ sagāravā sappatissā sabhāgavuttikā viharitvā kāyassa bhedā param maraṇā sugatiṃ saggaṃ lokaṃ upapajjiṃsu.
>
> Vin.II.162.
>
> Monks, at that time, the partridge instructed the monkey and elephant in the five precepts and himself lived observing the five precepts. Having been respectful, deferential, and living in harmony toward each other, they were reborn to heaven – the happy realm - after death, from the breaking up of the body.

Briefly, all three animals were reborn to the realm of heaven after death.

In all the occurrences stated above, the context implies that both 'the breaking up of the body' and 'death' happen at the same time. Death is determined by the breaking up of the body. According to the English translation, 'breaking up' or 'dissolution,'[741] when used in regard to an organism, could signify a

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[739] 'Virtue' here stands for the Pali word *'sīla'*. In Buddhist ethics, five basic *sīlas* are: 1) refraining from killing 2) refraining from taking the non-given possessed things 3) refraining from sexual misconducts 4) refraining from telling a lie 5) refraining from taking intoxicants. A person who is endowed with *'sīla'* always refrains from doing those immoral actions by oneself, as well as from causing others to do so.

[740] Vin.I.227.

[741] Davids and Stede, op. cit., p. 35.

biological decomposition of the body. However, this does not match the Pali usage, especially according to Buddhist philosophy.

According to Buddhist principles regarding rebirth, a dying person will change his/her state of being immediately after death; some transfer to another realm promptly and others turn to an intermediate state (*sambhavesī*)[742] before proceeding to another realm. In any case, the old body is not of use anymore and the being is considered 'dead,' even though the physical body is still fresh and not yet decomposed biologically.

Here it is clear that 'the breaking up of the body' in the examples given does not mean biological decomposition of the physical body, as that would take quite a while after death and would not 'determine death.' Rather, 'the breaking up of the body' that defines death, is the separation of elements composing a 'life,' or the 'five aggregates subject to clinging' (*pañca-upādāna-khandha*), as they are called generally in Buddhist philosophy.

Such a separation might be viewed as the separation of consciousness from the physical body. As stated in the Pali canon, for a life to be born, there must be consciousness of the 'future being' entering the womb at the moment of conception. From that moment, the mental elements (*nāma*) and physical matter (*rūpa*) are formed, constituting a being.[743] It is also said elsewhere that this physical body possesses consciousness (*saviññāṇaka kāya*).[744] This implies that the assembly or separation of consciousness and physical body can determine 'birth' and 'death' respectively.[745] Although it is certain that the

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[742] *Sambhavesī* = seeking rebirth. It signifies a being whose physical body perishes before his life-span exhausts. As a result, he cannot proceed to other realm promptly, but has to wait until his present life-span (*āyu*) is exhausted. In this intermediate state, it is said that the being is supported with some kinds of food among the four kinds of food, said to sustain the beings already reborn or the beings who are seeking rebirth. S.II.13.

[743] D.II.63.

[744] For example, see S.II.253, S.III.80, A.IV.53.

[745] In regard to the relation of these two life-factors (body and consciousness - *saviññāṇaka kāya*) with the composition of 5 aggregates, Harvey suggests the equation of 'consciousness' in both cases and the equation of 'body' (*kāya*) in the former case with the first four aggregates in the latter. In other words, the 'body' from which the consciousness (*viññāṇa*) leaves at death refers to form (*rūpa*) endowed with feeling (*vedanā*), cognition (*saññā*) and volitional activities (*saṅkhāra*). It is the *nāma-rūpa* as defined in the 'early *sutta*s.' Harvey, *The Selfless Mind*, op. cit., pp. 116-117.

present consciousness of a living human is different from the consciousness that has entered the womb at the moment of conception, they are termed with the same title '*viññāṇa*.'

Alternatively, it could be seen, as the elder Kumāra-kassapa declared to King Pāyāsi, that death is a permanent separation of the life-principle (*jīva*) from the physical body.[746] Harvey suggests the equation of the life-principle (*jīva*), which is said to leave the physical body at death, with the flux of consciousness (*viññāṇa*) together with vitality (*āyu*) and heat (*usma*).[747] Nevertheless, such an equation seems to refer to only the 'sense' of the term, rather than to the quality of the 'flux of consciousness' itself, for such consciousness (*viññāṇa*) has changed over times from entering mother's womb at birth to the time it leaves the physical body at death. The latter seems to carry with it the summation of memory on accumulated deeds performed over lifetimes up to the present death.

In the *Mahāvedalla-sutta*, we learn from the elder Sāriputta's answer to the elder Mahākoṭṭhita's question that this body is still alive as long as these three attributes - vitality (*āyu*), heat (*usma*), and consciousness (*viññāṇa*) - remain. Whenever these three elements leave the body, that body is to be abandoned,[748] i.e., it is considered 'dead.' Thus, the breaking up of the body could be understood as the departure of these three elements from the physical body.[749]

In all the cases listed above, it is clear that the term *kāya* (body) in the phrase *kāyassa bhedā param maraṇā*, 'after death, from the breaking up of the body,' is to be understood as 'life' rather than only the physical body. The term *kāya* seems to provide the sense of a 'totality' of the whole being.

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[746] D.II.334.

[747] Harvey, "The Mind-Body Relationship in Pali Buddhism," op. cit. p. 31. Cf. Harvey, *The Selfless Mind*, op. cit., p. 94.

[748] M.I.296.

[749] This seems to raise a question regarding the nature of consciousness in the cessation of perception and sensation (*saññāvedayitanirodha*). For examples of studies that discuss this issue, see Harvey, "The Mind-Body Relationship in Pali Buddhism," op. cit.; Bandu Madanayake, "Is There Consciousness in Nibbana?," in *New Paths in Buddhist Research*, ed. Anthony Kennedy Warder (Durham, N.C.: Acorn Press, 1985).

Also in some occurrences, the phrases *kāyassa bhedā* and *param maraṇā* are separated. An example is found in the *Brahmajāla-sutta* where the origin of the nihilistic view is described. There, some ascetics or brahmins proclaim:

> So kho bho attā yato kāyassa bhedā ucchijjati vinassati na hoti param maraṇā
>
> D.I.35.
>
> Since that self ceases, perishes from the breaking up of the body, it does not exist after death....

This clause announces the discontinuity of the being after death. Again, even in this view of non-Buddhists, the phrase 'breaking up of the body' here denotes a separation of the constituents of life, and thus the term *kāya* should be understood as 'life' or 'personality' as a whole. It is one's body as the whole series of five *khandha*s - the physico-psychological complex that is the object of the idea of self. It is what one speaks of when one says 'I.'

In such a notion of *kāya*, it is obvious that, once its totality is abandoned, the individual members of the whole *kāya*, i.e., the physical elements constituting the *kāya*, cannot function anymore. Thus, in this case, the functions of the life-constituents are dependent on the 'totality' of the whole being, as observed in the cases of *kāya* signifying 'body' of various kinds. Indeed, *kāya* in this case seems to overlap the meaning of *kāya* as 'body' of different beings. The difference lies in only the emphasis in each instance of the term. Even in this last case where *kaya* denotes the entire life, the appropriate English translation of the term is perhaps still 'body,' the meaning of which may subsume the five aggregates.

Ambiguous *Kāya*: Assemblage or Collective Titles?

Apart from the notions of *kāya* listed above, there are some instances of the term *kāya* that appear ambiguous. This concerns mostly its usage in the sense of collective title or assemblage of mental elements.

Body of Mental Elements

Besides signifying various aspects of collection and body, the term *kāya* is used also as a reference to assemblages of mental elements. For example, *Cha-saññā-kāya* refers to six assemblages of particular types of perception:

1) *rūpa-saññā* - an assemblage of 'perceptions of form,'
2) *sadda-saññā* - an assemblage of 'perceptions of sound,'
3) *gandha-saññā* - an assemblage of 'perceptions of smell,'
4) *rasa-saññā* - an assemblage of 'perceptions of taste,'
5) *phoṭṭhabba-saññā* - an assemblage of 'perceptions of touch'
6) *dhamma-saññā* - an assemblage of 'perceptions of mentally perceivable elements.'

Cha-sañcetanā-kāya refers to 'six assemblages of sensory perceptive intentions' which correspond to the above six kinds of perception.[750]

Cha-viññāṇa-kāya refers to 'six assemblages of cognitions' corresponding to the interaction of external and internal faculties. For example, *cakkhuviññāṇa*, 'visual cognition,' arises from the interaction of form or visible object (*rūpa*) and eye or optical sensational organ (*cakkhu*); *sotaviññāṇa*, 'the auditory cognition,' arises from the meeting of sound or audible object (*sadda*) with ear or auditive sensational organ (*sota*); and so on.

Cha-phassa-kāya refers to 'six assemblages of contacts.' These mean six kinds of contact (*phassa*) arising from the link of external and internal faculties as well as their corresponding cognition. These contacts give rise to six kinds of corresponding experience (*vedanā*), thus constituting *cha-vedanākāya*, 'six assemblages of experience.'

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[750] D.III.244.

The term *kāya* in all these compounds signifies an assemblage or aggregation of mental factors.[751] Members of each assemblage are of both similar and different nature. For example, *cha-saññā-kāya*, as described above, consists of six kinds (six assemblages) of cognition, from *rūpasaññā*, 'perception of forms,' to *dhammasaññā*, 'perception of mentally perceivable elements.' While differentiated by their individual functions, they are classed together according to their similarity or shared identity, namely, being a type of sense-perception. So the compound term *cha-saññā-kāya* seems to have the same nature as those groups (*kāya*) with a shared identity that each member seems to be independent of the group or the whole assemblage. In this respect, the name of the assemblage seems to be a collective title of its members, rather than being a functional assemblage. However, as its individual members are mental factors of a living being, either human or non human,[752] they have their functions. Their functions, while being independent of the 'collective title' of the whole group, i.e., '*cha-saññā-kāya*,' are still dependent on corresponding sensations (*vedanā*) and cognitions (*viññāṇa*), or the like. For example, *rūpasaññā* (perception of form), while seeming independent of the collective title '*cha-saññā-kāya*,' functions in correspondent with '*cakkhu-samphassa*' (eye-contact), '*cakkhu-samphasssajā-vedanā*' (sensation born of eye-contact), '*cakkhu-sañcetanā* (eye-perceptive-intention), and '*cakkhu-viññāṇa*' (eye-consciousness), and so on. Thus, looking in this way, the word 'cha-*saññā-kāya*' or '*cha-vedanākāya*,' or the like, seem to be mere 'collective titles' of their individual members, rather than being a functioning assemblage. Their individual members, while being independent of these titles, function dependently on the existence of the whole 'being' or the 'functioning aggregates' (*khandha*s). Nevertheless, while the functions of individual sense organs seem to be independent of each other, the complicated nature of mind-body interaction might render them working dependently. Thus, their notions

[751] Each title of those mental factors is also an assemblage of particular mental factors of its type.

[752] Here, the context is discussed in general, without specifying particular types of beings.

are still ambiguous whether they are really 'collective titles' or 'functioning assemblages.'

In any case, what is certain is that their functions depend on the existence of the whole being. In other words, if that living being does not exist, there will not be these assemblages of mental factors belonging to him/her. Therefore, their functions are dependent on the totality of the whole being, i.e., the *pañca-khandha*s (the five aggregates), in the same way as each of the five aggregates cannot function separately. They can work only when the totality of the whole being (*kāya*) remains.

Body of Defilements

Besides signifying an assemblage or a collective title of mental factors, the term *kāya* can refer also to a group of defilements such as *Cha-taṇhā-kāya* 'the set of six kinds of craving,' which also comprises cravings resulting from the six kinds of experience mentioned above.[753] In order to pass beyond the world of rebirth, these cravings need to be known (*veditabbā*)[754] and eliminated (*pahātabbā*).[755] These desires correspond to the assemblage of sensation (*vedanā*), being negative mental factors that contaminate the mind of living beings. This implies that they work in the same way as the other assemblages of mental factors mentioned above, i.e., their work is dependent on the totality of the whole being. In other words, they can function only when the being is still alive.

A similar compound referring to a 'group of defilements' is *avijjākhandha* - 'the heap (or body) of ignorance.' This compound does not contain the term '*kāya*' but '*khandha*,' which can be used interchangeably with *kāya*. The Pali passage regarding the body of ignorance uses both terms interchangeably. The

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[753] Six cravings are *rūpataṇhā, saddataṇhā, gandhataṇhā, rasataṇhā, phoṭṭhabbataṇhā, dhammataṇhā*; refering to cravings in form, sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental perception respectively.

[754] M.III.282.

[755] D.III.280.

break of 'the big body of ignorance' (*mahanta avijjākhandha*) is identified with the break of the 'big body' (*mahanta kāya*) of enemies.[756] Elsewhere, we read that the perfect release (*sammāvimutti*) is identified with the break of the big body of ignorance (*mahanta avijjākhandha*). This is compared with a warrior's bursting of the big body (*mahanta kāya*) of an army.[757]

These assemblages of defilements can be said also, in a way, to be mental factors. They are thus of the same ambiguous nature as the above listed titles.

Conclusion

This chapter has studied various notions of the term *kāya* as found in the Pali canon, with the aim to demonstrate the possibility of alternative interpretations of the term *kāya* that constitutes the compound *dhammakāya*. It first listed a number of possible translations of the term as 'group,' 'mass,' 'collection,' 'heap,' 'body,' and so on. All meanings are classed roughly into two main definitions, namely, 'collection' and 'body.' A list and a number of examples of the term's usage in both senses are provided along with a discussion in regard to their distinct implications which may be employed as a criterion to determine the appropriate interpretation of *kāya* in each instance encountered.

The similarity and difference of the two main definitions of *kāya*, namely, 'collection' and 'body,' may be considered in terms of structure and function. By structure, both 'collection' and 'body' can be regarded as 'similar' for both of them can be reduced to individual members or elements. By function, however, they seem to be different. The word 'collection' appears to hold loosely its individual members or elements, or is a mere collective title of individual members grouped together loosely with some shared identities or similarities. Such properties or functions intimately belong to each individual member of the group, and so they remain, even though the 'sense of the group'

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[756] *Idha bhikkhave monk mahantaṃ avijjākhandhaṃ padāleti. Evaṃ kho bhikkhave monk mahato kāyassa padāletā hoti.* A.I.285. Here, the phrase *mahantaṃ avijjākhandhaṃ* is compared with *mahato kāyassa*.

[757] A.II.202.

no longer exists. The word 'body' carries a more complex sense of function and activities. The functions of its individual members or elements are dependent on the sense of 'totality' of the whole body. If an individual member is separated from the 'whole,' or if the sense of the 'whole' no longer exists, individual members can no longer retain their function. Thus, the term *kāya* becomes more meaningful in the sense of 'body.'

While the meaning 'collection' may be regarded as the term's literal sense, considering from its composite nature; the meaning 'body' is found more frequently with a broad range of utility. In the sense of 'collection,' *kāya* may denote group or company of beings or non-beings. It may hold general or specific titles of group of human or deities of different levels. In the sense of 'body,' the word may denote parts or whole of various kinds of body belonging to beings in different realms. The constituents of bodies of beings in different realms vary according to the refined nature of beings in different levels.

The word denotes also various aspects of the human physical body. The study listed a number of different bodies of a human. Other than the human physical body as in normal situation, in a particular situation, especially in relation to meditation, qualities of the human body can either be influenced or itself influence surrounding environment through a highly concentrated mind. The word can signify also a 'new and superior personality,' entitled 'mind-made body,' as a separate being arising through the power of meditation. The expression of various meditative states in relation to 'body' seems to suggest both specific sustenance in prolonged meditation and the presence of a particular 'body' witnessing or realising *dhamma*s or *nibbāna*. This is specific in the case of certain noble disciples entitled *kāyasakkhī* or the 'bodily witness' who witnesses the *dhamma*s by means of body.

The significance of our study in the present chapter in relation to the academic problem may be looked at in two aspects. Firstly, the chapter has demonstrated various senses of *kāya* which is complicated, especially when it involves the

practice of meditation and spiritual realisation. Secondly, it is observed that whenever the term is used with more complicated sense, particularly in relation to the function and efficacy of its constituents, it is likely that the term conveys the sense of ‘body’ rather than ‘collection.’ These implications will be significant to the re-interpretation of the compound *dhammakāya* in the next chapter, on which our study will continue now.

Chapter 4
DHAMMAKĀYA IN EARLY BUDDHISM

Introduction

This chapter provides a documentation of early Buddhist references regarding *dhammakāya*. According to the statement of academic problem addressed in chapter 1, omission in previous scholarship involves partly the interpretation of its two components, namely, *dhamma* and *kāya*. These were dealt with in chapters 2 and 3 respectively. This fourth chapter attempts to resolve another part of the gap concerning the interpretation of the term *dhammakāya* itself. It will employ also the results of the study in the previous two chapters either to supplement the discussion or to help determine ambiguous points. This will fulfil the understanding of early Buddhist *dhammakāya* as a whole.

In doing so, the chapter will begin with a list of possible translations of the term *dhammakāya* from a grammatical viewpoint. Then it will list and discuss early Buddhist references to *dhammakāya*, one after another. The references will be arranged according to the relationship of *dhammakāya* with the Buddha, *Paccekabuddha*s, and noble disciples respectively. After discussing also the *dhammakāya* in the sense of teaching, the chapter will determine finally the relative significance of its two components, as related to the interpretation of the whole compound *dhammakāya*.

First of all, the study will examine all possible translations of the Pali term *dhammakāya* according to its philological analysis.

Possible Translations of the Pali term *Dhammakāya*

The compound term *dhammakāya* is composed of two constituents, namely *dhamma* and *kāya*. Grammatically, these two constituents of *dhammakāya* can be related in four different ways, resulting in three possible translations of the compound, i.e., two translations as a noun, and one as an adjective. As a noun,

which some scholars simply refer to as meaning '*dhamma*-body,' [758] *dhammakāya* can be understood as any of these two grammatical forms, namely *kammadhāraya* (Skt. *karmadhāraya*) and *tappurisa* (Skt. *tatpuruṣa*) compounds.[759] As an adjective, it is to be understood as a *bahubbīhi* (Skt. *bahuvrīhi*) compound. Its possible grammatical formations are as follows:

1. *Kammadhāraya* compound

In the case of a *Kammadhāraya* compound composed of two constituents, at least one constituent must be an adjective, or perform an adjectival function, qualifying the other term. Otherwise, both can be adjectives qualifying another substantive(s). If both components of the compound are substantives, the compound could be a *Kammadhāraya* when the first component performs an adjectival function, qualifying the last. In this latter case, the compound in the form of XY will be translated as 'the Y that is X.' The term *dhammakāya* can be translated as a *Kammadhāraya* compound in the same manner, in which case it is to be translated as 'the body that is *dhamma*,' as Lancaster does in his PhD thesis. [760] Its grammatical analysis is written as '*dhammo kāyoti dhammakāyo*,' meaning 'the body that is *dhamma* is called *dhammakāya*.' This grammatical translation as 'body that is *dhamma*' can be simplified suitably as '*dhamma*-body' in English, as some scholars do.

2) *Tappurisa* compound

As a *tappurisa* compound, both consituents must be substantives. The former constituent could be formed in many different cases except the nominative, while the latter constituent is in the nominative base. For the compound

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[758] Harrison, op. cit., pp. 44, 46; Kajiyama, op. cit., p. 11; Edward Conze, *The Perfection of Wisdom in Eight Thousand Lines and Its Verse Summary*, Wheel Series; 1. (Bolinas,: Four Seasons Foundation; distributed by Book People, Berkeley, 1973), p. 207.

[759] Grammatically, the compound *dhammakāya* may be analysed also as a *dvanda* (Skt. *dvandva*) compound in which two nouns are collected together with the conjuction 'and' (P. *ca*) without any relationship between the two components. In this case, *dhammakāya* is to be translated as '*dhamma* and body.' While this is grammatically possible, it seems out of the context of the present study, as will be clearer when the study goes through the Pali passages.

[760] Lewis R. Lancaster, "An Analysis of the *Aṣṭasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitāsūtra* from the Chinese Translations" (Doctor of Philosophy, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1968), p. 92.

dhammakāya, even though other forms of *tappurisa* are possible,[761] the most appropriate form for translation is the *chaṭṭhī-tappurisa*, of which the first constituent is formed as a genitive, either in singular or plural forms. The grammatical analysis of this latter form can be written either as '*dhammassa kāyoti dhammakāyo*,' or '*dhamānaṃ kāyoti dhammakāyo*.' The former is to be translated as 'the body of *dhamma*,' and the latter, 'the body of *dhamma*s.'

In the same way as when it is formed as a *kammadhāraya* compound, *dhammakāya* as a *tappurisa* compound can be referred to simply in English as '*dhamma*-body.' Because the term *kāya* can be used also in the sense of a collection, totality, or assemblage, the compound *dhammakāya* may be translated also as a 'collection of *dhamma*s,' a 'totality of *dhamma*s,' or an 'assemblage of *dhamma*s.' Some scholars, by interpreting '*dhamma*' as teaching, translate the compound as a 'collection of teachings'[762]

Besides being translated as a noun, the compound *dhammakāya* can be translated also as an adjective. This is possible in the third grammatical form, the *bahubbīhi* (Skt. *bahuvrīhi*) compound.

3) *Bahubbīhi* compound

In a *bahubbīhi* compound (attributive compound), both constituents form the whole adjectival compound that qualifies other substantive(s). For example, in the case of the term *dhammakāya* as a designation of the *Tathāgata*,[763] the

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[761] Other forms are such as:

1. *Tatiyā-tappurisa* compound: *dhammena kāyo* = body by *dhamma*.
2. *Catutthī-tappurisa* compound: *dhammassa kāyo* = body for *dhamma*.
3. *Pañcamī-tappurisa* compound: *dhammasmā kāyo* = body from *dhamma*.
4. *Sattamī-tappurisa* compound: *dhamme kāyo* = body in *dhamma*(s).

[762] For example, see Williams, *Mahāyāna Buddhism*, op. cit., p. 173.

[763] The word '*Tathāgata*' is an epithet of the Buddha which he uses to refer to himself throughout the Pali canon. Even though it has been elaborated to refer to also other Arhats, it is used in the present context only to refer to the Buddha.

For further information regarding different senses and usages of the term in the canon and commentarial literature, see P. Gnanarama Thera, "*Tathāgata*: A Study of the Canonical and Commentarial Definitions," in *Recent Researches in Buddhist Studies: Essays in Honour of Professor Y. Karunadasa*, ed. Asanga Tilakaratne (Colombo: Y. Karunadasa Felicitation Committee in collaboration with Chi Ying Foundation, Hong Kong, 1997). For a comprehensive study regarding the nature of the *Tathāgata*, see Harvey, "The Nature of the *Tathāgata*," op. cit.

compound qualifies the *Tathāgata*, whom it designates. Its grammatical analysis can be written either as '*dhammo kāyo assāti dhammakāyo* (*Tathāgato*)' or '*dhammo kāyo yassa so dhammakāyo* (*Tathāgato*). Here, the compound is to be translated as 'having *dhamma* as body,' 'who has *dhamma* as body,' or 'whose body is *dhamma*.'

To summarise, the compound word *dhammakāya* can be analysed in three grammatical forms, yielding three possible translations as follows:

1. *Kammadhāraya* compound: body that is *dhamma*.
2. *Tappurisa* compound: collection of *dhamma*s, body of *dhamma*(s)
3. *Bahubbīhi* compound: having *dhamma* as body

The next part of this chapter will document all occurrences of the term as found in the Pali canon, and consider which of these three translations is the most appropriate for each occurrence. It will observe also properties and characteristics of *dhammakāya* described or implied in the passages, in relation to the academic questions addressed in the first chapter. References from the Chinese *Āgama*s will also supplement the discussion where relevant, in the same way as performed in the previous chapter.

The documentation will commence from the *dhammakāya* as related to the Buddha.

Dhammakāya **and the Buddha**

The Pali reference to *dhammakāya* that shows its clear relation to the Buddha is located in the *Aggañña-sutta*. Herein, the term is regarded as a designation of the *Tathāgata*.

This well-known passage from the *Aggañña-sutta* is sometimes claimed to be the sole appearance of *dhammakāya* in the Pali canon.[764] Here, the Buddha delivers a discourse to two novices, Vāseṭṭha and Bhāradvāja, who have gone forth from Brahmin families. The discourse defines clearly who can genuinely call himself 'an heir of *dhamma*' or 'the *Tathāgata's* true son.'

> Yassa kho panassa, Vāseṭṭha,[765] tathāgate saddhā niviṭṭhā mūla-jātā patiṭṭhitā daḷhā asaṃhārikā[766] samaṇena vā brāhmaṇena vā devena vā Mārena vā Brahmunā vā kenaci vā lokasmiṃ, tassetaṃ kallaṃ vacanāya:[767] 'Bhagavatomhi putto oraso mukhato jāto dhamma-jo dhamma-nimmito dhamma-dāyādo'ti. Taṃ kissa hetu? *Tathāgata*ssa hetaṃ, vāseṭṭha, adhivacanaṃ 'Dhamma-kāyo iti pi Brahma-kāyo iti pi, Dhamma-bhūto iti pi Brahma-bhūto iti pīti.
>
> D.III.84
>
> Vāseṭṭha and Bhāradvāja, he whose confidence in the *Tathāgata* is settled, rooted, established, solid, irremovable (unshakable) by any ascetic or brahmin, any deva or Māra or Brahmā or anyone in the world, can truly say: 'I am a son of the Blessed one, born of his mouth, born of *dhamma*, created by *dhamma*, an heir of *dhamma*.' Why is that? Because, Vāseṭṭha and Bhāradvāja, this designates the *Tathāgata*: '*dhamma-kāya*,' '*brahmakāya*,' '*dhamma-bhūta*,' or '*brahma-bhūta*.'

Here, the passage lists four designations of the *Tathāgata*: '*dhammakāya*,' '*brahmakāya*,' '*dhammabhūta*,' and '*brahmabhūta*.' The two latter compounds are undoubtedly adjectives, as their last component '*bhūta*,' which is a past participle modifying the subject, indicates. The first two compounds, each consists of two substantives, can be translated potentially as any one of the three alternative types of compounds, as explained earlier. However, as designations of the *Tathāgata*, it is perhaps more likely that they work as adjectives and thus should be translated as *bahubbīhi* compounds, as Harrison suggested previously.[768] Thus, the present study tentatively takes these two

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[764] Williams, *Mahāyāna Buddhism*, op. cit., p. 284, note 5; Harrison, op. cit., p. 50; Horner, "Early Buddhist Dhamma," op. cit., p. 117.

[765] The vocative 'Vāseṭṭha' in this passage is recorded variously in different versions of the Pali *sutta*. The PTS and CS versions put the word in singular form, while the BJ and SR versions show the word in plural form 'Vāseṭṭhā.' The singular form implies that the Buddha was speaking to Vasettha only, while the plural form implies both Vāseṭṭha and Bhāradvāja. (The latter is a reduced form of a *Dvanda* compound in which there remain only one component and the plural number.) However, it should be more correct to say that the discourse was actually delivered to both of them. This is because it is stated at the beginning of the story of all versions that both of them approached the Buddha together [D.III.80], and at the end of the story that both of them were delighted and rejoiced at the Blessed one's speech.' [D.III.98]. Therefore, the present work translates this vocative in plural form.

[766] In some other manuscripts, this is written, '*asaṃhāriyā*.'

[767] The SR version writes, '*vācāya*.'

[768] Harrison, op. cit., p. 50.

designations of the *Tathāgata* as *bahubbīhi* compounds. This gives their meanings as 'having *dhamma* as body' or '*dhamma*-bodied' and 'having *brahma* as body' or '*brahma*-bodied' respectively.

Previous Scholarly Interpretations

As stated in chapter 1, many scholars cite and discuss this well-known passage as references to *dhammakāya*. Most of them define the compound *dhammakāya* in this passage, or its first component - *dhamma* - in the same way, i.e., that it is used in the sense of teaching, verbally taught by the Buddha and is regarded as his true body.[769] Such a conclusion is drawn from the character of the Buddha's 'true son,' as mentioned in the passage, that he is 'born of his mouth' and 'born of *dhamma*,' for the *Tathāgata* is 'embodied in the *dharma*.'[770]

Dutt interprets the passage as follows:

> Just as a brāhmaṇa would say that he is born of Brahmā, through his mouth – *Brahmano putto oraso mukhato jāto brahmajo brahmanimmito brahmadāyādo* – so a Śākyaputtiyasamaṇa may say that he is born of Bhagavā, through his mouth, born of his doctrine, made of his doctrine, etc.[771]

Xing makes a similar statement in his interpretive translation of the passage:

> Just as a *brāhmaṇa* would say that he is born of Brahmā, through his mouth, so a *Śakyaputtiyasamaṇa* may say that he is the son of the Bhagava, born of his mouth, born of the Dhamma, created by the Dhamma, an heir of the Dhamma (*dhammadāyāda*).[772]

Gombrich discusses the passage in detail, with a similar interpretation:

> At first he (the Buddha) sounds as if he is equating himself with Brahmā, the creator god, but after a few words he makes clear that the real equation he is making is not of persons but of teachings: his teaching is, for his followers, the true Veda. In the final

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[769] Harrison, op. cit., pp.50-55; Mus, *Barabuḍur*, op. cit., p.6; Dutt, "The Doctrine of *Kāya*," op. cit., p.521; Reed, op. cit., p. 28.

[770] Harrison, op. cit., p. 50.

[771] Dutt, *Mahāyāna Buddhism*, op. cit., p. 139.

[772] Xing, op. cit., pp.70-71.

> sentence of the paragraph he hammers home the point that what counts about him is not his individuality but his teaching.[773]

In this way, Gombrich interprets the term *dhamma* in the compound *dhammakāya* as 'teaching.' Nevertheless, he leaves space for the possibility of further implications:

> …the language leaves open a further implication, because in the compounds *Brahma-kāyo* and *Brahma-bhuto*, *brahma-* could be masculine (as suggested by the equation in the previous sentence: the Saṅgha are the Buddha's sons just as the brahmins are Brahmā's) or neuter (equating the Buddha's Dhamma with *brahman* in the sense of Veda/ultimate truth.)[774]

Although Gombrich may have no interest in further discussion on this point, his suggestion seems to point in the same way as the Geigers previously proposed, that the Buddha intentionally replaced the brahmanical *brahman* with the Buddhist *dhamma*.[775] This has long been a subject of scholarly discussion in the west regarding the relationship between early Buddhism and the *Upaniṣad*s.[776]

Therefore, with regard to the meaning of *dhammakāya* in this passage, a number of previous authors unanimously interpreted its first component as 'teaching,' and so the whole compound '*dhammakāya*' refers to a 'body of teachings' or 'collection of teachings.'

Harrison suggests a different translation of *dhammakāya* in this passage as an adjective, 'having *dhamma* as body,' while still agreeing that the term *dhamma* is used in the sense of 'teaching.'

Need, in contrast, believes that the meaning of *dhammakāya* in this passage is unclear and can be hardly certain. Nevertheless, he comments also that:

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[773] Gombrich, "The Buddha's Book of Genesis?," op. cit., p. 165.

[774] Ibid.

[775] Geigers, *Pali Dhamma*, op. cit., pp. 4, 71.

[776] A review of such scholarly discussions can be found in Carter, *Dhamma*, op. cit., p. 33-38.

The inter-relatedness between the Buddhist philosophy and the *Upaniṣad*s is controversial. To clarify such a matter, espeically with regard to the *dhammakāya*, would require a separated research project.

> … care should be taken with respect to reading the compound as "one who has the teachings as his body," or "one whose body has been developed in accordance with the teachings," where teachings is understood as "text" or "canon."[777]

As already mentioned, it appears that the conclusion of *dhammakāya* as exclusively meaning 'teaching' was the result of an over-generalisation of the term *dhamma* in two distinct meanings, 'teaching' and 'truth' or 'reality.' It is perhaps a generalisation that results from the flexible or manifold nature of both words.

In addition, more attention is yet to be paid to the nuance of the context in accordance with the Buddhist philosophy. In this regard, the passage leaves at least three implications to be determined, those of:

1. The 'true son' of the *Tathāgata*
2. The parallel descriptions of monks and brahmins
3. Parallel usage of the term *dhamma* and *brahma*

The following part will discuss further these implications.

True son of the *Tathāgata*

In the *Aggañña-sutta* passage quoted above, the criterion of a monk being a 'true son' or a '*dharmic* inheritor' is set forth by the quality of his unshakable confidence in the *Tathāgata*. This point is mostly overlooked in previous scholarship, where such a quality is not mentioned at all or is interpreted as a mere 'believe' or an 'adoption of Buddhist teachings.'[778]

In the passage, the firmness of such confidence in the *Tathāgata* is described as 'settled, rooted, established, and solid' so that it 'cannot be agitated by anyone in the world of *saṃsāra*.' In other words, such a firm confidence cannot be altered either by the one who possesses magical power, or who is of so-called

[777] Need, op. cit., pp. 377-378.

[778] Need, op. cit., p. 377.

high birth, or by divine power, evil power, or highest power; these are symbolised by the titles 'ascetic, brahmin, god, Māra, and Brahmā,' respectively.

Such a high degree of unshakable confidence should not be understood as merely 'strong belief' or 'firm faith' in the normal sense. According to Buddhist philosophy, this kind of unshakable confidence is a specific quality of a noble person (*ariya-puggala* or *ariya-sāvaka*) - beginning from a Stream-attainer (*sotāpanna*).[779] As discussed earlier, noble disciples have witnessed (seen, known, attained, penetrated) the truth and become independent or self-reliant regarding Buddha's *dhamma*.[780] They are thus endowed with at least four qualities of a Stream-attainer (*sotāpattiyaṅga*), namely, unwavering confidence in the Buddha, *Dhamma*, *Saṅgha*, and the perfect virtues beloved of the noble ones (*ariyakanta-sīla*).[781] Due to the process of transformation as a consequence of their realisation,[782] these noble disciples have eradicated at least the three lower fetters (*saṃyojanas*), including doubt (*vicikicchā*).[783] Therefore, the quality of unshakable confidence, stated in the Pali *Aggañña-sutta* as a property of the Buddha's 'true son,' indicates the person's state as being a noble disciple who has witnessed the truths, rather than 'anyone who claim himself a Buddhist.'

The definitions of this 'true son' reaffirm his state of being a noble disciple. Here, he is entitled a) a son of the Blessed Lord, b) who is born of his mouth, c) who is born of *dhamma*, d) who is created by *dhamma*, and e) an heir by (of) *dhamma*. These titles are used synonymously to refer to different aspects of the

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[779] The term '*ariya-puggala*' and '*ariya-sāvaka*,' are translated usually as 'the noble one' and 'noble disciple' respectively. Buddhist nobles are classified into four major categories; 1) *sotāpanna* - a Stream-attainer, 2) *sakadāgāmī* - a once returner, 3) *anāgāmī* - a Non-returner, and 4) *arhant* - an emancipated one, an arahat.

[780] A.IV.186, 210, 213.

[781] D.II.93-94.

[782] This was discussed in chapter 2.

[783] Nd1.27, Nd1.507. For details of the three lower fetters, see note 412.

same person. Each of them corresponds, in one way or another, to the qualities of a Stream-attainer as summarised in chapter 2.[784]

The title 'son of the Blessed one' suggests that, through the Buddha, the person was (re)born to the same plane of being to which the Buddha belongs. As the Buddha has passed beyond the worldly plane (*lokiya-bhūmi*) to the transcendental plane (*lokuttara-bhūmi*), such a title suggests the state of the person as being a noble disciple (*ariya-sāvaka*).

The following title clarifies further the means by which the person was born through the Buddha. 'Born of his mouth' signifies his rebirth into such a transcendental plane through the Buddha's verbal teaching, including association with a virtuous one, and so on. This corresponds to the set of four activities[785] belonging to a Stream-attainer (*sotāpattiyaṅga*) which brings about other sets of qualities.

The title 'born of *dhamma*' (*dhammaja*) and 'created by *dhamma*' (*dhamma-nimmita*) imply a further step - the realisation or attainment of *dhamma*, and the

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[784] To repeat, those sets of qualities are as follows:

1. Being possessed of four activities: a) association with a virtuous one, b) listening to his teaching, c) proper contemplation on the teaching heard, d) proper practice according to the teaching.

2. Being possessed of the noble eightfold path, and, to some extent, the qualities of a non-trainee.

3. Having witnessed (seen, known, attained, penetrated) the truth and becomes independent or self-reliant regarding Buddha's *dhamma*.

4. Being endowed with four qualities of a Stream-attainer (*sotāpattiyaṅga*), namely, unwavering confidence in the Buddha, *dhamma*, *Sangha*; and the perfect virtues beloved of the noble ones (*ariyakanta-sīla*).

5. Having quitted of the five evils, as well as having penetrated the truth to be realised - the dependent causation (*paṭicca samuppāda*).

As has been argued, it is most likely that a Stream-attainer possesses *all* of these qualities, rather than *any* of them. These different descriptions seem to represent different steps in the process of realisation, rather than descriptions of different individuals, as outlined in chapter 2.

[785] See no. 1 in the previous note.

While it is evident in the canon that a noble disciple could have attained his noble state through a single hearing of the Buddha's discourse without any other practice or activities, it can be explained that, during the time of his listening and understanding of the teaching, his mental qualities have been gradually purified. In that situation, all the three modes of activities, i.e., body-speech-mind, were all 'at peace,' which is the goal of such 'practice.' As such, his physical, verbal, and mental deeds can be considered 'right' or 'wholesome' in accordance with the first six constituents of the noble eightfold path. [For details of the 'noble eightfold path,' see note 604.] This engenders the seventh (*sammāsati*) and eighth (*sammāsamādhi*) constituents of the path, which can be identified with the 'appropriate state of mind' which is 'instrumental' to the realisation. As is usually described in the canon, when the mind of the listener become 'workable' as such, the Buddha would consider it is the 'right time' to deliver a deeper discourse associated with the four noble truths in order to 'direct the listener's workable mind' to the realisation of the truth. In this manner, a single listening to the discourse can be equated with the 'right practice' elaborated as these four activities, as tabulated in chapter 2.

consequent transformation of the person. Having listened to the teaching, having contemplated on it, and practised according to it, the person then attains or realises the truth. Consequently, some fetters (*saṃyojanas*) have been eradicated and superior or transcendental qualities have arisen in him. In other words, the person's qualities have been raised up from an ordinary level to a supramundane level; in which case, he is said to be (re)born of *dhamma* (*dhammaja*) and created by *dhamma* (*dhammanimmita*). Therefore, these two titles, *dhammaja* and *dhammanimmita*, indicate the person's acquisition of a new state - his rebirth to the *dharmic* plane, obtained through the penetration of the *dhamma*.[786] Here, Horner rightly notes that 'a spiritual paternity and sonship are meant, not a physical one.'[787]

The last title 'an heir by (means of) *dhamma*' (*dhammadāyāda*) is used generally to refer to a noble disciple. As discussed earlier, the realisation gives rise to transformation, in which case the person is described as having changed his lineage, from his household family to the same lineage as that of the Buddha - the lineage of Buddhist nobles (*ariya-vaṃsa* or *ariya-gotta*). The designation *dhammadāyāda* 'the *inheritor* by *dhamma*' indicates the qualities acquired as a consequence of realisation, as if inherited from the Buddha. As with the material inheritance that indicates the succession of the same worldly lineage, the *dharmic* inheritance indicates the same *dharmic* lineage. In other words, the person is possessed of the same sort of properties or qualities as those of the Buddha, albeit of lesser degree perhaps. Such properties, being the indicators of the noble lineage, must be similar to those of the Buddha, while effectively distinguishing both the Buddha and the inheritor from a worldly individual (*puthujjana*).

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[786] This is, perhaps, as Eliade observes, "for the Buddha, one can be 'saved' only by attaining *nirvāṇa* - that is, by going beyond the plane of profane human experience and re-establishing the plane of the unconditioned. In other words, one can be saved only by *dying* to this profane world and *being reborn* into a transhuman life impossible to define or describe." Eliade, op. cit., p. 165.

[787] I. B. Horner, "Early Buddhist Dhamma," *Artibus Asiae* 11, no. 1 (1948)., op. cit., p. 119.

That being the case, the description of his 'unshakable confidence' in the Buddha and the various descriptions of such a 'true son' indicate his state as a noble disciple (*ariya-sāvaka*). This point will be advantageous to further understanding of other implications which our study will discuss below.

Implications from parallel descriptions of monks and brahmins

In the *Aggañña-sutta* passage currently discussed, the parallel descriptions of Buddhist monks and brahmins is readily apparent, as Gombrich points out.[788] The parallel passages are compared below:

> a) brāhmaṇā va brahmuno puttā orasā mukhato jātā brahma-jā brahma-nimmitā brahma-dāyādā.
>
> D.III.81.
>
> The brahmins are Brahmā's own children, born of his mouth, born of Brahmā (or *brahman*), created by Brahmā (or *brahman*), heirs of Brahmā (or *brahman*).'
>
> b) Bhagavatomhi putto oraso mukhato jāto dhamma-jo dhamma-nimmito dhamma-dāyādo.
>
> D.III.84.
>
> (A noble disciple) is the Blessed Lord's own child, born of his mouth, born of *dhamma*, created by *dhamma*, an heir of *dhamma*.

In the brahmanical claim above (a), the term '*brahma-*' in the three compounds - *brahmajā*, *brahmanimmitā*, and *brahmadāyādā* - can be translated grammatically either as a masculine Brahmā which refers to the bramanical creator, or a neuter *brahman* which represents brahmanical ultimate reality.[789] Therefore, from the above two parallel passages, the comparable context may be arranged in two forms, according to two different translations of the term '*brahma-*' as follows.

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[788] Gombrich, "The Buddha's Book of Genesis?," op. cit., pp. 163-165.

[789] The distinction between the masculine Brahmā (the creator) and the neuter *brahman* (ultimate reality) is mentioned in Gombrich, "The Buddha's Book of Genesis?," op. cit., p. 165.

Table 3: Parallel descriptions of monks and brahmins

No.	Brahmins	Monks (Noble disciples)	Implied Parallel
1.	Brahmā's children	*Tathāgata*'s sons	Mythical paternity & Spiritual paternity
			Brahmā & *Tathāgata*
2.	Born of Brahmā's mouth	Born of *Tathāgata*'s mouth	Brahmā's mouth & *Tathāgata*'s verbal teaching
3.	Born of Brahmā	born of *dhamma* (*dhamma-ja*)	Brahmā & *dhamma*
	Born of *brahman*		*brahman* & *dhamma*
4.	created by Brahmā	created by *dhamma* (*dhamma-nimmita*)	Brahmā & *dhamma*
	created by *brahman*		*brahman* & *dhamma*
5.	heirs of Brahmā	heirs of *dhamma* (*dhamma-dāyāda*)	Brahmā & *dhamma*
	heirs of *brahman*		*brahman* & *dhamma*

From the table, two possible translations of *brahma-* suggest different sets of parallels implied in the context. This may be summarised as follows:

1. The *Tathāgata* & Brahmā, the creator god
2. The *Tathāgata*'s mouth (verbal teaching) & Brahmā mouth.
3. The *dhamma* & Brahmā, the creator god;

   or

   The *dhamma* & *brahman*, the ultimate reality.

In both instances of the alternative translations of *brahma-*, it is apparent that the semantic depth of the whole passage is not flat. In the brahmanical claim,[790] the passage first refers to Brahmā's mouth, but later on to the Brahmā as a whole. The same holds true for the passage regarding the noble disciple.[791] At the beginning, the context refers to the *Tathāgata*'s mouth, which implies his verbal teaching, comparable to Brahmā's mouth. But later on, it refers to

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[790] This refers to the claim at D.III.81. 'The brahmins are Brahmā's own children, born of his mouth, born of Brahmā (or *brahman*), created by Brahmā (or *brahman*), heirs of Brahmā (or *brahman*).'

[791] This refers to the claim at D.III.84. '(A noble disciple) is the Blessed Lord's own child, born of his mouth, born of *dhamma*, created by *dhamma*, an heir of *dhamma*.'

dhamma, which is comparable to Brahmā, the creator, or *brahman*, the ultimate. Therefore, to conclude readily that *dhamma* in the passage refers to the Buddha's 'teaching' merely because the passage begins with the phrase *mukhato jāto*, 'born of mouth,' is to oversimplify the context of the passage.[792]

As to the question of what can be the actual meaning of *dhamma* and *dhammakāya* in the passage, the study will examine the above two sets of parallels one after another.

1) In the case that '*brahma*-' refers to the masculine 'Brahmā'

In the case in which the term '*brahma*-' in the three compounds[793] is translated as masculine 'Brahmā,'[794] the comparison of the first and the third parallels suggests that the Buddha parallels both himself and the *dhamma* with the brahmanical Brahmā, the creator. Thus, he is equating himself with the *dhamma* as well. The reason given immediately afterward reinforces this point: 'Why is that? (*taṃ kissa hetu*) Because the *Tathāgata* is designated '*dhammakāya*, *brahmakāya*, *dhammabhūta*, *brahmabhūta*.'[795] In other words, because the *Tathāgata* is entitled '*dhamma*-bodied' (*dhammakāya*) and '*dhamma*-become' (*dhammabhūta*), the noble disciples are then entitled 'born of *dhamma*,' 'created by *dhamma*,' and 'heir of *dhamma*' as they are the Buddha's sons. In this manner, the sense of the *Tathāgata*'s paternity is retained throughout the passage. The *Tathāgata*'s designations and the noble disciples' titles are thus connected together, implying that the term *dhamma* in all these compounds, both the designations of the *Tathāgata* and the titles for his noble disciples, carries the same connotation. And it must be the connotation that is comparable to the brahmanical Brahmā, the creator.

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[792] Perhaps it can be said that to equate the *Tathāgata* with his verbal teaching resembles the equation of the whole being of Brahmā with his mouth.

[793] As a reminding, the three compounds under discussion are *brahma-ja*, *brahma-nimmita*, and *brahma-dāyāda*.

[794] Gombrich chooses to translate '*brahma*-' in this instance as 'Brahmā.' Ibid., pp. 163-165.

[795] D.III.84. *Taṃ kissa hetu? Tathāgatassa hetaṃ, vāseṭṭha, adhivacanaṃ 'Dhamma-kāyo iti pi Brahma-kāyo iti pi, Dhamma-bhūto iti pi Brahma-bhūto iti pīti.*

In order to determine which connotation of *dhamma* is meant here, it is necessary to understand the distinction between the *Tathāgata*'s spiritual paternity and the Brahmā's mythical fatherhood. According to the brahmanical claim, Brahmā can simply create brahmins through his mouth, out of his desire.[796] In contrast, the *Tathāgata*'s 'creation' of a Buddhist noble disciple through his verbal teachings involves the entire process of enlightenment.

As discussed earlier, the titles of the *Tathāgata*'s true son as 'born of *dhamma*,' and 'created by *dhamma*,' imply the person's transformation from a worldly human (*puthujjana*) into a noble one (*ariya-puggala*). His title as an 'heir of *dhamma*' implies similar qualities he shares with the Buddha which indicates the noble heredity. Therefore, the '*dhamma*' constituting all these compounds must refer to something which 'transforms' the person into noble states, so that itself is comparable to the creator god. At the same time, it must refer also to the shared qualities of the Buddha and his noble disciples which are distinct from those of worldly people.

According to a general process of enlightenment documented in the second chapter of this work,[797] the transformation (step 4) arises in succession of, and as a consequence of, the realisation of truths. This step involves the elimination of particular fetters, as well as the rise of new qualities.[798] For example, in the case of a Stream-attainer, it involves the destruction of defilements such as doubt and uncertainty, along with the rise of various specific qualities such as the unshakable confidence in the Buddha, *dhamma*, *Saṅgha*, and the perfect virtues beloved of the noble ones (*ariyakanta-sīla*). In such a circumstance, the

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[796] Paul Deussen, V. M. Bedekar, and Gajanan Balkrishna Palsule, *Sixty Upaniṣads of the Veda*, 1st ed. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1980), pp. 414-415.

[797] The general process of enlightenment outlined in the second chapter consists of five successive steps as follows:

1. The learning and practice according to the teaching.
2. The acquisition of realising tools.
3. The realisation of truths.
4. The transformation.
5. The proclamation of one's own release.

[798] For more details, see Table 1 in Chapter 2.

dhamma which transforms a worldly human (*puthujjana*) into a noble disciple (*ariyasāvaka*) could be identified with either a defilement-uprooter, the qualities arisen, or even both.

Thus, we need to determine which kind of *dhamma* could function as a defilement eliminator and which *dhamma* can be the resultant quality. The *Paṭisambhidāmagga* provides an answer. It describes the function of the four transcendental paths in eradicating different sorts of defilements, as illustrated in the following table.

Table 4: *Dhamma*s as Defilement Uprooters and their Results[799]

No.	Functioning *Dhamma*	Defilements eradicated	Resultant Quality	Noble State Attained
1	The path to the Stream-attaining state (*sotāpatti-magga*)	- all corruptions of view (*diṭṭhāsava*) - three other corruptions of strong degree leading to the state of loss	The fruit of the Stream-attaining state (*sotāpatti-phala*)	The Stream-attaining state (*sotāpanna*)
2	The path to the Once-returning state (*sakadāgāmi-magga*)	- coarse corruptions of sensual pleasure (*kāmāsava*) - part of corruptions regarding rebirth (*bhavāsava*) - part of corruptions regarding ignorance (*avijjāsava*)	The fruit of the Once-returning state (*sakadāgāmi-phala*)	The Once-returning state (*sokadāgāmī*)
3	The path to the Non-returning state (*anāgāmi-magga*)	- all corruptions regarding sensual pleasure - part of two other kinds of corruptions	The fruit of the Non-returning state (*anāgāmi-phala*)	The Non-returning state (*anāgāmī*)
4	The path to the Arhatship (*arahatta-magga*)	- all the last two kinds of corruptions	The fruit of Arhatship (*arahatta-phala*)	The Arhatship (*arahanta*)

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799 Ps.I.94. A similar message is delivered in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya*, but with less details. A.II.146-147. Herein, only '*magga*' is mentioned, without being separated into four paths. Elsewhere in the *Paṭisambhidāmagga* [Ps.117], similar statements are made regarding the functions of the four noble paths. It is said that each path, when one cultivates it to certain extent, particular fetters will be abandoned, and particular proclivities will be exhausted. Even though the passage clarifies which kinds of fetter (*saṃyojana*) and proclivity (*anusaya*), instead of intoxicants (*āsavas*), are eradicated by each path, what is consistent is that these paths function in an eradication of different levels of defilements.

Once a particular 'transcendental path' eradicates particular defilements, new resultant qualities arise. These ensuant qualities could be called collectively 'transcendental fruits,' as included in the table.

It is thus most likely that the *dhamma*s which transubstantiate a person into noble states are the 'transcendental paths and fruits,' as listed in Table 3 above. They are, therefore, comparable to Brahmā, the creator. As these supramundane paths and fruits, being transcendental (*lokuttara*), can be regarded also as 'shared properties/qualities'[800] of the Buddha and his noble disciples which distinguish them from worldly people (*lokiya puthujjana*), the above conclusion is fortified.

As discussed above, the connection of the *Tathāgata*'s designation[801] as the reason for the true son's titles[802] renders it necessary that the term *dhamma* in all compounds in both cases carries the same connotation. Thus, it can be concluded heuristically that the term *dhamma* as the first constituent of the compound *dhammakāya* and *dhammabhūta* refers to these transcendental paths and fruits. These may be collectively called 'transcendental realities.' This agrees with the conclusion made in the chapter 2 regarding 'seeing the *dhamma* and seeing the Buddha,' that the essence of the Buddha should refer to transcendental realities/qualities which are 'incorruptible.'

The study will now turn to examine another possible case, where the term *brahma*- in the compounds is translated as *brahman*.

2) In the case that '*brahma*-' refers to the neuter '*brahman*'

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[800] This need not mean that all the noble ones possess all transcendental paths and fruits. Strictly speaking, the *dhamma* as 'essence' of the Buddha and Arhat disciples should be '*nibbāna'* or the final fruit (*arahattaphala*), for once they have attained the Buddhahood and Arhatship their spiritual qualities are transformed and they have passed beyond the earlier paths and fruits by means of permanent destruction of certain defilements. Likewise, the noble disciples of lower levels should not have possessed the higher paths and fruits. Nevertheless, as the word 'heir' indicates, while the properties shared by the father and the son must be of the same sort, they can be of different levels. In other words, the properties the son inherited from his father may be less than that belonging to the father. In a similar way, the qualities/properties possessed by the noble disciples could be of lower level than that possessed by the Buddha, but they must be of the same kind (in this case – *lokuttara*) that differs from the qualities/properties of worldly persons.

[801] This refers to the designations *dhammakāya* and *dhammabhūta*.

[802] This refers to the titles *dhammaja*, *dhammanimmita*, *dhammadāyāda*.

In the other case in which the term *brahma-* is translated as '*brahman*,'[803] the ultimate,[804] the third parallel[805] suggests that the term *dhamma* in the passage equals ultimate reality, but in the Buddhist sense. This directly precludes the interpretation of the term *dhamma* in the passage as the Buddha's 'verbal teaching,' while allowing its interpretation as 'transcendental reality.'[806] The equation of the Buddha and *dhamma*, as well as the connection between the Buddha's designation and the titles of his 'true son' is implied in the same manner as in the above case.

Thus, the translation of '*brahma-*' in the brahmins' titles either as the masculine Brahmā or as the neuter *brahman* leads to the same conclusion. It is concluded that the term *dhamma* constituting the compound *dhammakāya* refers to 'transcendental reality.' It refers to the *dhamma* that is the incorruptible Buddha's essence;[807] *dhamma* which gives birth to noble disciples, *dhamma* which is the shared quality of the Buddha and his noble disciples which distinguishes them from worldly people, and *dhamma* the

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[803] Most scholars are more inclined to choose this translation. For example, see Geiger, "Dhamma Und Brahman," op. cit.; Harrison, op. cit., note 20, p. 78. In the latter references, Harrison refers to a number of scholars who translate '*brahma-*' in this case as '*brahman*,' which Harrison himself thinks more correct. Gombrich, while translating the term in this case as the masculine 'Brahmā,' acknowledges also the possibility of translating it as the neuter '*brahman*.' Gombrich, "The Buddha's Book of Genesis?," op. cit., p. 165.

[804] As Geiger states, "Ursprünglich umfasst dieses Wort die Summe aller der geheimnisvollen magischen Kräfte, die im Opfer und in der priesterlichen Tätigkeit enthalten sind." Geiger, "Dhamma Und Brahman," op. cit., p. 74. Gombrich, however, takes *brahman* to mean 'true *Veda*' of which the original meaning is simply 'knowledge.' Gombrich, "The Buddha's Book of Genesis?," op. cit., p. 165. Cf. Gombrich, "Recovering the Buddha's Message," op. cit., p. 12.

[805] As a reminding, the 'third parallel' refers to the parallel of the term '*dhamma*' in the three titles of Buddhist noble disciples (*dhammaja*, *dhammanimmita*, *dhammadāyāda*) with the term '*brahman*' in the titles of brahmins (*brahmaja*, *brahmanimmita*, *brahmadāyāda*.)

[806] Geiger takes the word '*brahman*' here to be synonymous to Buddhist *nibbāna*. Geiger, "Dhamma Und Brahman," op. cit., p. 76.

[807] Here, we may note a Chinese *Āgama* reference that corresponds to this conclusion. The passage refers to '*dhammakāya'* as being the 'essence' of the Buddha.

This occurrence of *fa-shen* (*dharmakāya*), found in the *Saṃyuktāgamasūtra* (T.100.II.445c.), has no Pali parallel. This is recorded in a separate piece of *sūtra* from the main *Saṃyuktāgama* (T.99) and its school affiliation has not yet been ascribed.

In this *sūtra*, the Buddha converses with his relatives, saying that it is wrong to identify the *Tathāgata* with form, sensation, perception, volitional activities, or consciousness. In other words, it is wrong to recognise the *Tathāgata* by means of the five aggregates subject to clinging (*pañca-upādānakkhandha*), for he has eradicated their root so that they cannot arise again, as if a person cut off the whole trunk of a palm tree so that it cannot rise again.

A relative, then, says that the *Tathāgata* is comparable to a hundred thousand year-old Sal tree (P. *sāla*). All its leaves and branches have fallen away and all that remains is its pith. The Buddha, as all of his fetters have been uprooted and the four kinds of wrong views have been completely eradicated, only his *dhammakāya*, which is true and perpetual, remains.

Here, the term *dhammakāya* is used in a sense of the true essence of the Buddha; the essence that manifests as his mind is perfectly purified.

'verbal expression' of which is regarded as the Buddha's verbal teaching. Therefore, the present study concludes that *dhamma* as 'transcendental reality' is the 'true body' of the Buddha.

While a conclusion is proposed here to some extent, it can be useful to examine further implications from the parallel usage of the term *dhamma* and *brahma* elsewhere. Such may add further understanding to the present conclusion regarding the four designations of the Buddha.

Implications from Parallel Usage of *Dhamma* and *Brahma*

Of the four designations of the Buddha, scholars note also the parallel usage of '*dhamma*' and '*brahma*' that seems to equate the *dhammakāya* with *brahmakāya* and *dhammabhūta* with *brahmabhūta*.[808] Such a parallel can be found also in other passages where *brahmacakka* replaces *dhammacakka*.[809] Horner notes the analogue of *brahmayāna* to *dhammayāna*, *Brahmajāla* to *Dhammajāla*, and another passage where *brahmacariya* and *dhammacariya* appear to correspond.[810]

The parallel usage of the two terms appears to have some significance. On their own, both terms can carry different connotations. But their analogous usage restricts their possible interpretations. It can be observed that, whenever both terms are mentioned in parallel, they usually refer to the stage of highest purity, namely, the stage where fetters have been uprooted.

The parallel between *dhammayāna* and *brahmayāna* points to this direction. In *Magga-saṃyutta*, the noble eightfold path is entitled either 'the path to/of *brahma*-' (*brahmayāna*),[811] 'the path to/of *dhamma*' (*dhammayāna*), or 'the

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[808] Geiger, "Dhamma Und Brahman," op. cit.; Horner, "Early Buddhist Dhamma," op. cit., pp. 117-118; Theodore Stcherbatsky, *The Conception of Buddhist Nirvana* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1977), p. 52; Gombrich, "The Buddha's Book of Genesis?," op. cit., p. 165.

[809] M.I.69-71, S.II.27, A.II.9, A.III.417-419, A.V.33-38 .

[810] *Dhammacariya-sutta*, Sn.49.

[811] This can be translated as 'the best path.' DA.III.865. Cf. S.V.4-6; Harvey, *The Selfless Mind*, op. cit., p. 271.

While the term *yāna* is used usually in the sense of 'vehicle,' its meaning in the ancient Indian traditions is 'path.' As *brahmayāna* and *dhammayāna* in this passage refer to 'the noble eightfold path' that one needs to practise by oneself, they

supreme path of victory in the battle' (*anuttara saṅgāmavijaya*).[812] It is because such a noble path, once cultivated and frequently practised to the degree that one 'is endowed with it' or 'has attained it,' is destined to experience the removal of lust, anger, and delusion.[813] Hence, the terms *dhamma* and *brahma* in this case refer to the state of supreme purity, where all fetters are uprooted, or at least they signify the 'best' state.

The same could be said for the parallel of *dhammacariya* and *brahmacariya*. Although these two compounds are normally used in different senses,[814] in the passage where they appear to be parallel, both are said to be the highest ways of living.[815]

It is likely that the analogue of both terms in the compound *dhammakāya*, *brahmakāya*, *dhammabhūta* and *brahmabhūta* in the *Aggañña-sutta* can be understood in the same way. The notion of the compound '*brahmabhūta'* found elsewhere seems to affirm this point. This compound always refers to an Arahat, who has eradicated all defilements.[816] Sometimes, an Arahat is described as 'living with his self become *brahma*' (*brahmabhūtena attanā viharati*).[817] In these cases, the Arhat is described sometimes as living in peace without burning himself or others, being satisfied, extinguished, tranquil, and experiencing happiness presently.[818] Sometimes, an Arahat, who lives with his self become *brahma*, is explained as passionless, as opposed to worldly people

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are, then, translated here as 'path to *brahma*' and 'path to *dhamma*' respectively. (Thanks to Prof. Richard Gombrich who brought such an ancient meaning of '*yāna*' to my attention.)

[812] The Pali '*saṅgāmavijaya*' could be translated either as a *tappurisa* compound 'victory in the battle' or a *bahubbihi* compound 'having victory in the battle.' In this case, the compound refers to the noble eightfold path, which is not the victory itself but leading to the victory. Therefore, it is translated here as a *bahubbihi* compound, literally 'the path to which the victory in the battle belongs.'

[813] S.V.5-6.

[814] The former generally refers to the renunciation (living the holy life), while the latter to the virtuous observances (living the righteous life).

[815] Sn.49.

[816] S.III.83.

[817] For example, see M.I.348-349, M.I.413, A.II.208-211.

[818] *so anattantapo aparantapo diṭṭhe va dhamme nicchāto nibbuto sītibhūto sukhapaṭisaṃvedī brahmabhūtena attanā viharati*. M.I.348-349, M.I.413, A.II.210-211.

who passionately seek material properties.[819] Therefore, this compound indicates the state of having eradicated all traces of defilements and sufferings - that he becomes one with the ultimate peace and happiness.

As Geiger remarks, the word *brahman* here is synonymous to *nibbāna*.[820] He notes also the use of the word '*brahmapatha*'[821] which, in a Pali manuscript,[822] is glossed as '*amatapatha*' - the way to the deathless. It is expressed explicitly that '*brahma-*' in the passage is to be understood as *Nibbāna*, 'the undying,' which is the highest goal of Buddhists.

On the whole, it appears that the terms *dhamma* and *brahma* constituting four designations of the *Tathāgata* are used in the sense of the 'highest.' It is most likely that they refer to either *Nibbāna* or Arhatship (*arahatta*).

This is in line with our earlier conclusion that the term *dhamma* in the designations of the Buddha refers to 'transcendental states' (*lokuttara dhamma*s), the highest of which that is the essence of the Buddha is *Nibbāna*. According to Buddhist philosophy, the *dhamma*s that 'create' or 'give birth (in the noble clan' to a Buddhist disciple could be referred to also as the 'highest' or 'ultimate,' as they transcend the realm of *saṃsāra*. These are systematised in Buddhist philosophy as the ninefold transcendental *dhamma* (*navavidha lokuttara dhamma*), subsuming the four noble paths, their corresponding fruits, and *Nibbāna*. Thus, from all implications discussed above, the present study concludes that the term *dhamma* in the compound *dhammakāya* and *dhammabhūta* refers to the ninefold transcendental *dhamma*, and more specifically '*Nibbāna*.'

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[819] M.II.160-162.

[820] Carter, *Dhamma*, op. cit., n. 130, p. 34 referring to Geiger, "Dhamma Und Brahman," op. cit., pp. 76-77.

[821] A.III.346.

[822] Phayre MS. (in Burmese characters), in the India Office Library. [Information from the preface of Edmund Hardy, *The Anguttara-Nikaya V.3* (London: Pali Text Society : Distributed by Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1976)., p. v.]

Possible Meanings of *Dhammakāya* in the *Aggañña-sutta*

In the above discussion, the present study translates the term *dhammakāya* tentatively as an adjective '*dhamma*-bodied' which refers to the embodiment of the Buddha's nature in (transcendental) *dhamma*, as Harrison suggests. Based on the present conclusion that its main component, *dhamma*, refers to *Nibbāna* or transcendental states, the *dhammakāya* as an adjective conveys the meaning that the Buddha has transcendental *dhamma* or *Nibbāna* as his 'body.' As *dhammakāya* in this instance designates the Buddha, such a translation as an adjective is naturally reasonable. Nevertheless, it can be useful to consider further whether other translations of *dhammakāya* as a noun are possible also.

From the context of the passage, there seems to be no indication that would preclude the translation of the term as a substantive. Thus, it is possible to try the other two grammatical forms, proposed at the beginning of the chapter, which will give the translation of the compound as a noun.

In the first alternative grammatical form, as a *kammadhāraya* compound, the translation of the term *dhammakāya* will be 'the body that is transcendental *dhamma*' or 'the body that is *Nibbāna*.' In this sense, the Buddha is identified with the body which is the transcendental *dhamma* or *nibbāna*.

In the other alternative translation, as a *tappurisa* compound, *dhammakāya* is translated as a 'body of transcendental *dhamma*' or the 'body of *Nibbāna*.' Also, in case the component '*kāya*' is translated as 'collection,' the compound term *dhammakāya* may be translated as a 'collection of transcendental *dhamma*s.' All these make three possible senses of the term *dhammakāya* as a substantive to be determined. As the term *dhammakāya* in this instance designates the *Tathāgata*, hence its three possible translations as a substantive convey the meanings that the *Tathāgata* is either:

1. the body that is transcendental *dhamma* or *Nibbāna*,
2. the body of (or pertaining to) transcendental states or *Nibbāna*, or

3. a collection of transcendental *dhamma*s.

The first translation gives a similar sense as that of the translation of the term as an adjective, as discussed above, that the *Tathāgata*'s body is the transcendental *dhamma*(s) or *Nibbāna*. The only difference is the shift of identification of this *dhamma*-body,[823] from 'belonging to the Buddha' to 'itself being the Buddha.'[824] This translation is possible, considering from the parallel usage of *dhammakāya* and *dhammabhūta*. The Buddha 'has become' (*bhūta*) identified with the transcendental *dhamma* or *Nibbāna*, and the *dhamma* is thus his body or his nature. Thus the Buddha is the body that is transcendental *dhamma*, or *Nibbāna*.

In this context, it can be helpful to recollect how our study has arrived at the conclusion that the component '*dhamma*' in the *Tathāgata*'s designation refers to 'transcendental *dhamma*.' To reiterate, the titles of the noble disciples are connected with the designations of the *Tathātata* by means of this reasoning; because the Buddha is '*dhamma*-bodied' and 'become *dhamma*,' thus 'his son' can be entitled 'born of *dhamma*,' 'created by *dhamma*,' and 'an heir by *dhamma*.' The term *dhamma* in all these compounds carries the same connotation that it is comparable to the 'creator,' or the *dhamma* that 'transform' a worldly human into a noble one. This refers to transcendental 'paths' and 'fruits.'

Considering the parallel usage of *dhammakāya* and *dhammabhūta* with *brahmakāya* and *brahmabhūta*, the study arrives at an alternative conclusion that the term *dhamma* in the passage should refer to *Nibbāna* or Arhatship, the

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[823] As stated at the beginning, the English expression as '*dhamma*-body' corresponds to both translations of *dhammakāya* as a substantive, i.e., 'body that is *dhamma*' and 'body of *dhamma*.' For the sake of simplicity and understanding, the present work refers sometimes to *dhammakāya* as a noun simply as '*dhamma*-body.'

[824] Some interpreters may prefer Buddhaghoṣa's interpretation at DA.III.865 that the Buddha is embodied in *dhamma*, i.e., his nature is expressed in *dhamma* (his teachings). However, rather than limiting itself to that particular Theravādin interpretation, our present study would prefer broader interpretations as the translation allows.

When translating the term as an adjective, as the Buddha 'has *dhamma* as body' or as 'his body is *dhamma*,' thus it can be said that 'the *dhamma*-body' or 'the body which is *dhamma*' belongs to him. But when the term is translated as a noun, it means the Buddha is 'the body that is (transcendental) *dhamma*.' In other words, the *dhamma*-body (the body which is *dhamma*) itself is the Buddha.

fruit of emancipation. Indeed, it is possible also to say that *Nibbāna* itself can 'transform' a human as well, for the realisation of *Nibbāna* engenders the transformation from worldly people to noble ones.[825] The study thus concludes that the term *dhamma* in all these compounds refers to 'transcendental *dhamma*(s).'[826]

The significance of the above conception lies in the fact that the meaning of '*dhamma'* is determined by 'its function' as 'transformer' or 'defilement eradicator.' Each transcendental path or fruit can be understood as a totality of various qualities. As an example, the Stream-attaining path (*sotāpattimagga*) can be composed of eight constituents of the noble eightfold path in the level of Stream-attaining state.[827] Thus, the path itself is the 'whole,' the 'totality' or 'entirety' of all path-constituents in the corresponding level. It is possible that different path-constituents may perform different functions in the elimination of defilements. Nevertheless, the effective elimination of corresponding fetters

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[825] As the *Dhammacakkappavattana-sutta* suggests, there can be different levels of the realisation of the four noble truths. These many levels may well correspond to different levels of transcendental states. (See note 337 p. 86 and the corresponding discussion in the same page. Cf. pp.120-121.) The learners (*sekha-puggala*) from the Stream-attainer (*sotāpanna*) to the Non-returner (*anāgāmī*) have realised *Nibbāna* also to their corresponding degrees.

[826] Cf. Harvey, *The Selfless Mind*, op. cit., pp. 233-4. Here, Harvey suggests different meanings for the component '*dhamma*' in *dhammakāya* and *dhammabhūta*; that in *dhammakāya* it means 'the noble eightfold path' and in *dhammabhūta* it means '*Nibbāna*.'

[827] S.V.348.

As to the identification of the transcendental paths and the noble eightfold path, a number of scholars provide interesting explanations in regard to the different levels of the 'path.' For example, Harvey explains the development of the threefold path in different levels up to the point where Arhatship is attained:

> With each more refined development of the virtue-meditation-wisdom sequence, the path spirals up to a higher level, until the crucial transition of Stream-entry is reached. The holy path then spirals up to Arahatship.

Peter Harvey, *An Introduction to Buddhism: Teachings, History, and Practices* (Cambridge [England]; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 70-71.

The above explanation on how the threefold path functions suggests the same kind of development for the noble eightfold path, because the two paths correspond to one another, as the nun Dhammadinnā explains to the householder Visākha. [M.I.301.] Hence, another scholar explains the function of the noble eightfold path in the same way:

> [R]ight concentration, again, becomes the basis of right views, right aspirations, and other steps of the noble eightfold path, which is now experienced on a higher level, and this spiral-like progression is continued until complete liberation is attained.

Govinda, *The Psychological Attitude of Early Buddhist Philosophy and Its Systematic Representation according to Abhidhamma Tradition* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1961), pp. 69-70.

Besides, in the same way as it is composed of the path constituents, the fruit that is the Stream-attaining state (*sotāpattiphala*) can be said also to be composed of release (*vimutti*), knowledge of one's own realease (*vimuttiñāṇadassana*), happiness corresponding to release (*vimuttisukha*), and so on, in the level of Stream-attaining. Thus, a Stream-attainer (*sotāpanna*) is described as being possessed of the tenfold quality of non-trainee (*asekhadhamma*), to an extent. (See note 407 for details of the tenfold qualities.) Note that these qualities are mentioned here merely to be an illustration, but not exhaustion of all qualities.

(*saṃyojana*s) requires the 'whole' or 'totality' by which the particular 'path' is named. In other words, the effective functions of individual path-constituents are 'dependent' of this 'whole' or 'totality' which is identified with the particular 'path.' Thus, the text mentions the eradication of particular fetters in accordance with different levels of the functioning path, from parth to the Stream-entry (*sotāpattimagga*) to the path to Arhatship (*arahattamagga*).[828] Therefore, the particular path is not a mere 'collective title' of the path-constituents but the 'essential totality' by which a 'body' is defined.[829]

The dependence of functions of individual constituents on the 'totality' of the particular transcendental path allows its definition as a kind of 'body.' The same could be said for transcendental fruits (*lokuttara phala*) and *nibbāna*. Thus, the transcendental *dhamma* itself can be defined as a 'body.' This supports the possibility of the translation of *dhammakāya* as a 'body that is (transcendental) *dhamma*.'

In regard to the second and third alternative translations, the same criterion may be employed. The '*dhamma'* in question is arrived at by its 'function' and 'efficacy,' it is more likely that the translation of such transcendental *dhamma* should be as 'body' rather than 'collection.' The translation of *dhammakāya* as a *tappurisa* compound is also possible, considering that it refers to 'body pertaining to (a particular) transcendental state' - a path, fruit, or *nibbāna*.'

That being the case, it seems possible to translate the term *dhammakāya* either as an adjective or a substantive. The term can be translated as 'having (transcendental) *dhamma* as body,' 'the body that is transcendental *dhamma*,' or 'the body pertaining to transcendental state.'

To conclude, the present section has examined the context of the term *dhammakāya* as a designation of the Buddha in accordance with the

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[828] Ps.I.96.

[829] As a reminder of the criterion that distinguishes a 'body' and a 'collection,' see illustration 1 and the surrounding discussion.

implications provided by the passage. These refer to implications from the definition of *Tathāgata*'s true son, from the parallel descriptions of monks and brahmins, and from the parallel usage of the term *dhamma* and *brahma* in the designations of the Buddha. It concludes that the term *dhamma* in the designation *dhammakāya* refers to transcendental *dhamma*s or *Nibbāna*, and that the word *dhammakāya* can be translated either as 'having *dhamma* as body,' 'body that is *dhamma*,' or 'body pertaining to *dhamma*,' where '*dhamma'* refers to transcendental *dhamma* or *nibbāna*.

In the next part, the study will examine another Pali passage that is related to *Paccekabuddha*s, the self-enlightened persons.

Dhammakāya and *Paccekabuddha*s

A *Paccekabuddha* is counted as one of the two types of Buddhas.[830] According to Buddhist philosophy, a *Pacceka-buddha* is a person who is of the highest wisdom of realisation that he can be self-enlightened, in the same way as a Buddha can. However, he is said to lack teaching ability in that he cannot teach others to obtain enlightenment in the same way as the Buddha can. Therefore, a *Paccekabuddha* does not need a teacher to lead him to his enlightenment, nor is he himself a teacher. This is perhaps one of the reasons why *Pacceka-buddha*s are described usually as travelling alone like the single horn of a rhinoceros.[831]

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[830] A.I.77.

Some scholars argue that the concept of a *Paccekabuddha* is originally non-Buddhist, and that it has been included into Buddhist texts later. A reason given is that the references to *Paccekabuddha*s are found also in the canon of Jainism. Gombrich proposes also that the assimilation of the concept regarding *Paccekabuddha*s into Buddhist canon could have resulted from an actualisation of 'an interstitial category' inferred logically. Norman, likewise, claims that the concept regarding this type of enlightened beings is 'pre-Buddhist' and 'pre-Jainist.' The issue is discussed in detail in K. R. Norman, "The Pratyeka-Buddha in Buddhism and Jainism," in *Buddhist Studies: Ancient and Modern*, ed. Philip Denwood and A. M. Piatigorsky, *Collected Papers on South Asia, No. 4*. (London: Curzon Press, 1983).

However, this can be looked at also from a different angle. In the Buddha's time, Buddhism was not regarded by the Buddha and his disciples as a particular 'school of thought.' Rather, it seems to be seen as 'a way of practice' or 'a way of life.' The Buddha's main concern of delivering his teaching is the enlightenment or the realisation of truth. Considering the characteristics of his speech discussed earlier, it is more likely that the Buddha does not think of *Paccekabuddha*s as 'Buddhist' or 'non-Buddhist' but rather enlightened beings. The same holds true for his statement regarding any types of noble disciples. For example, the Buddha would call *anyone* who possesses qualities of a Stream-attainer as a 'Stream-attainer' (*sotāpanna*). The categorisation of 'Buddhist' and 'non-Buddhist' by means of 'registering' to a 'particular school of thought' seems to be a later classification or mere scholarly definition or differentiation for the convenience of discussion proposed within the academic arena.

[831] Although the Pali word '*khaggavisāṇa*' could mean either the 'rhinoceros's horn' or the animal 'rhinoceros' itself, this work chooses the former definition for it better symbolises the *Paccekabuddhas'* solitude.

Due to his enlightening superiority and purity, a *Paccekabuddha* is then ranked as second to the Buddha, and is said to be the second superior field of merit.[832]

Buddhist traditions hold that many *Pacceka-buddha*s can arise in the world in the same age,[833] while only one Buddha can arise in the world at a time. *Pacceka-buddha*s are persons who deserve people's veneration by *stūpa*s (*thūpāraha*),[834] who possess human essence (*sattasāra*),[835] are free from trouble (*anigha*), desireless (*nirāsa*), free from grief (*visalla* = removed of the dart), well-enlightened, superior men (*naruttama*),[836] having great powers (*mahānubhāva*), and whose craving for rebirth is exhausted.[837]

In the *Apadāna* literature, besides the life history of the Buddha and his disciples, a section is devoted to a depiction of the characteristics of *Pacceka-buddha*s. This section is entitled '*Paccekabuddhāpadāna*.' At verse 52 of the section, there is a mention of the *dhammakāya* in relation to *Paccekabuddha*s. The verse states:

> Mahantadhammā bahudhammakāyā,
> cittissarā sabbadukkhoghatiṇṇā;
> udaggacittā paramatthadassī,
> sīhopamā khaggavisāṇakappā.
>
> Ap.I.13.
>
> (The *Paccekabuddha*s) whose *dhamma*(s) is great, having many *dhamma*s as body (or having many *dhamma*-bodies), whose mind is independent (without attachment), have crossed beyond the river of all sufferings, whose minds are delighted, seeing (the seers of) the supreme welfare, comparable to *sīha* (who is the king of forest animals), and the (single) horn of a rhinoceros.

In this verse, many of the words seem to carry various connotations in themselves. In the first line of the verse, two compounds performing the adjectival function of qualifying *Paccekabuddha*s are *mahantadhammā* and

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[832] The first superior field of merit is the Buddha. M.III.254.

[833] In *Isigili-sutta*, the Buddha relates to monks that there were five hundred *Paccekabuddha*s living together at the Isigili mount in Magadha. M.III.68.

[834] D.II.142-143.

[835] This agrees with the meaning of '*dharmakāya*' in a Chinese *Āgama* reference. For more details, see note 807.

[836] M.III.69.

[837] M.III.71.

bahudhammakāyā. The former could be literally translated as 'having great *dhamma*s' or 'whose *dhamma*s are great.' To consider what is meant by the term *dhamma*(s) in this compound, it may be helpful to look at the preceding verses, which occur at the beginning of the same story.

Immediately preceding the verse in question, there are two other verses referring to *Paccekabuddha*s in general. They are described as follows:

> They whose virtue is very pure, whose wisdom is supremely purified, whose minds are composed, being vigilant, gifted with introspection, the seers of superior *dhamma*s, cognise the *dhamma*s composed of the path's constituents and elements of enlightenment. The wise ones, having cultivated three kinds of deliverances, do not proceed to discipleship in the Buddhas' teaching, and become *Paccekabuddha*s who are self-enlightened.[838]

These verses describe the *Paccekabuddha*s as ones possessed of supreme purity, wisdom, wakefulness, composure, and having the ability for seeing and knowing. In other words, they are full of realising capacity, and so they finally become self-enlightened ones. Then, it is probable that the term '*dhamma*s' in the qualitative compound *mahantadhammā* 'having great *dhamma*s' means *dhamma*s pertaining to such capacity for realisation. Certainly, these qualities of *Paccekabuddha*s are great, compared to those of the noble disciples.

The latter compound qualifying the *Paccekabuddha*s is '*bahudhammakāyā*.' Grammatically, this compound could be translated in two different ways: 'having many *dhamma*s as body' or 'having many *dhamma*-bodies.'

In the first translation, the compound *bahudhammakāyā* is considered as a *bahubbīhi* compound. It is composed of two elements: 1) the *kammadhāraya* compound '*bahudhammā*' = many *dhamma*s and 2) another component '*kāya*.' Its grammatical analysis is '*bahudhammā kāyā yesaṃ te bahudhammakāyā* (*paccekabuddhā*)' = those whose bodies are many *dhamma*s; they are called 'those having many *dhamma*s as body.' In the last translation, the compound is a *bahubbīhi* compound composed of 1) the prefix '*bahu*' and 2) a

[838] Ap.I.13.

kammadhāraya or a *tappurisa* compound, '*dhammakāya*' = 'body that is *dhamma*' or 'body of *dhamma*.'

The first translation seems to convey the meaning that a *Paccekabuddha* has many *dhamma*s as his body, where 'many *dhamma*s' refer to the qualities or the capacity of self-enlightenment. The latter implies that a *Paccekabuddha* could have more than one 'body that is *dhamma*.' This may be possible also, as there is no indication in the early text that *dhammakāya* must be singular.[839]

It may be argued that, it is not probable for an enlightened being to possess many *dhammakāya*s at the same time. This is because, once a noble one has attained a higher transcendental level, this 'totality of his qualities' (*dhammakāya*) has been already *transformed*, because of a further permanent destruction of certain defilements (in which case we call them 'uprooted'), so that he is no longer possessed of a lower level of transcendental state (*dhammakāya*), which is less pure.[840] Nevertheless, the information provided in the canon seems insufficient to determine this with certainty. Therefore, this study holds that both translations are possible. In any case, the verse conveys the meaning that a *Paccekabuddha* has *dhamma*(s) as his body (or bodies) or that he also possesses many *dhamma*-bodies. In other words, they are also '*dhamma*-bodied' - where '*dhamma*s' refers to the qualities pertaining to self-enlightenment. Here again, we note the connection between the term *dhammakāya* and enlightenment.

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[839] As Harrison states, the understanding that *dhammakāya* must be singular is 'later traditional belief' that links the *dhammakāya* with other words for reality such as *dhammatā*, *dhammadhātu*, etc. Harrison, op. cit., pp. 44, 48.

As the present study has observed above, in regard to *dhammakāya* and the Buddha, the *dhammakāya* may be identified with any transcendental path, fruit, or *nibbāna*. This seems to allow the possibility of different levels of *dhammakāya*. The study of *dhammakāya* and noble disciples, later in this chapter, will affirm this point.

[840] This may be one of the reasons why a noble disciple is not subject to 'regress,' and he thus entitled '*avinipātadhama*,' meaning 'whose nature is not to fall.'

This work is aware of the dispute among early Buddhist schools regarding this issue, as to whether a noble disciple is subject to retrogression, as made informative by Masuda. [Jiryo Masuda, "Origin and Doctrines of Early Indian Buddhist Schools," *Asia major* 2 (1925): 1-78.] However, this study determines the issue mainly in accordance with the philosophy embedded in the Pali canon, as stated in the 'methodology.' It hopes also that future research may be able to demonstrate how such seemingly different viewpoints of the early Buddhist schools could be reconciled with further study regarding *dhammakāya* as found in early texts of those schools.

A further point that can be drawn from this passage is the meaning of *dhamma* in the term *dhammakāya*, where it is used as an adjective. The adjectival *dhammakāya* in the case of *Paccekabuddha*s is comparable to that in the case of the Buddha's designation. We noted earlier that scholars tend to interpret it as 'teaching.' However, this does not work with the adjective '*dhammakāya*' referring to *Paccekabuddha*s, as they do not need a teacher, and they themselves are not 'teachers,' but 'enlightened beings.'[841] This then **reinforces** the notion that the term *dhamma* in the adjective '*dhammakāya*' refers to 'qualities pertaining to enlightenment' which are transcendental states or qualities.

Some might like to argue that the Buddha and *Paccekabuddha*s are not the same. As the Buddha is a teacher, then it should be fine to say that he 'has teaching as body.' However, this is unlikely. It would be strange to differentiate that the component '*dhamma*' of the adjectival *dhammakāya* refers to 'teaching' in the case of Buddha, while allowing it to refer to 'transcendental qualities' in the case of *Paccekabuddha*s. For such would give an impression that a Buddha is a 'non-enlightened being,' which is incorrect. This, again, strengthens our earlier remark that the term *dhamma* as a component of *dhammakāya* in the *Aggañña-sutta* and *dhamma* as a component of *dhammavinaya* as in the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta*, are of different nature. To equate them means taking the risk of an overgeneralisation. The study of this passage thus reinforces our earlier conclusion regarding *dhammakāya* and the Buddha that the component *dhamma* in the adjective *dhammakāya* does not refer to 'teaching,' but 'transcendental qualities/states.'

Need's recent research, which mentions also the occurrences of *dhammakāya* in the *Apadāna* literature, understands the compounds '*mahantadhammā'* and '*bahudhammakāyā'* in this passage as instrumental case. It thus translates both

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841 Even though some *Paccekabuddha*s might have taught, their discourses are brief and mainly concerned with the praise of solitude, rather than containing instructions on how to practise oneself in order to gain spiritual realisation. See Ap.7-14.

compounds as "by way of the great *dhamma*" [842] and 'by way of *bahudhammakāya*"[843] respectively. Apparently, Need is aware of such a 'later understanding in Buddhist tradition' [844] that necessitates *dhammakāya* as singular. Thus, perceiving that the word '*bahudhammakāya*' indicates a plurality, he comments:

> *Bahudhammakāya* is, of course, unusual and difficult to render. "*Bahu*" generally indicates number rather than scope, and yet the term is perhaps in apposition to *mahantadhamma*. Further, it is unclear whether the term modifies *dhamma* or *kāyā* - although *dhammakāya* is not plural, the sense could be "manifold body of *dhamma*," rather than "body of manifold *dhamma*s."[845]

In any case, Need's translation of both compounds as instrumental case indicates that the '*bahu-dhammakāya*' mentioned in the passage is instrumental to the *Paccekabuddha*s' enlightenment. Again, this agrees with the above conclusion that *dhammakāya* performs a function of defilement eliminator or transformer, so that it is 'instrumental' to the enlightenment.[846]

In conclusion, the study in this section adds further information that *dhammakāya* is significant not only to the Buddha but also to the enlightenment of *Paccekabudha*s.

The study will now proceed to examine further the meaning of *dhammakāya* in relation to noble disciples.

Dhammakāya and Noble Disciples

Other than its relation with the Buddha and *Paccekabuddha*s, a Pali canonical reference mentions also the relation of *dhammakāya* with Buddhist noble disciples. This is found in the seventeenth story of the *Therīyāpadāna* which

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842 Need, op. cit., p. 379.

843 Ibid.

844 Harrison, op. cit., p. 48.

845 Need, op. cit., p. 380.

846 Need seems to share this conclusion. He refers to references to *dhammakāya* found in different sets of texts, especially passages where a monk expresses that he has seen the Buddha by way of his *dhammakāya* but not by way of his *rūpakāya*. Need interprets this expression as an indication that *dhammakāya* is '*instruments*.' Ibid., p. 382.

records the autobiography[847] of the great nun Gotamī - the aunt and foster mother of the Buddha.

In this particular account, the great nun considered her day of passing and went to see the Buddha for the last time. On the way to the Buddha's residence, her declaration to female lay supporters, who lamented on her parting, indicates her state of being an Arhat, who has completely destroyed all fetters (*saṃyojana*s), and whose trace of rebirth has been uprooted.[848] In the first part of her acknowledgement regarding her intention of passing, in the presence of the Buddha, she makes the comparison of her motherhood to the Buddha's fatherhood. The relevant lines are as follows:

31. Ahaṃ sugata te mātā tvaṃ ca dhīra pitā mama;
    saddhammasukhado[849] nātha, tayā jāt'amhi gotama.
32. Saṃvaddhitoyaṃ sugata rūpakāyo mayā tava;
    anindiyo[850] dhammakāyo[851] mama saṃvaddhito tayā.
33. Muhuttaṃ taṇhāsamanaṃ khīraṃ tvaṃ pāyito mayā;
    tayā'haṃ santam accantaṃ dhammakhīram hi pāyitā.

Ap.532.

31. I am your mother, O the well-gone one; and, O the wise, you are my father;
    O Gotama, the refuge who gives happiness of truths, I have been born through you.
32. This physical body of yours, O the well-gone one, was brought up by me;
    The blameless (pleasurable) *dhamma*-body of mine was brought up by you.
33. You were fed by me the milk that could relieve thirst (only) momentarily;
    But I was fed by you the *dhamma*-milk that is perpetually peaceful.

In this passage, a comparison is made between worldly motherhood and spiritual paternity, the fostering of the physical body and that of the *dhamma*-body, the thirst-relieving efficacy of ordinary milk and the milk that is *dhamma*. In all cases of such a comparison, the superiority of the spiritual side

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[847] According to the Buddhist tradition, it was customary that an Arhat who was going to pass away in the Buddha's time, would come and acknowledge his/her parting in the midst of the assembly presided by the Buddha. Such acknowledgement generally contains his life history since former births until the present. The collection of such stories is called *Apadāna* literature. It is incorporated in the *Khuddaka-nikāya* of the Pali canon.

[848] Ap. 531. Here, her declaration reveals 1) her realisation of the four noble truths, by three rounds - twelve steps, 2) she has completely finished the course of practice laid down by the Buddha, 3) her release 4) her destruction of all desires 5) her complete attainment of successive fruits of renunciation, and 6) her absence of all fetters (*saṃyojanas*).

[849] Another manuscript gives '*~sukhada*' indicating the vocative case.

[850] A Sinhalese and a Burmese Mss. gives '*ānandito*.' SR version: '*ānandiyo*'

[851] Here, the BJ, CD, and SR versions of the *Tipiṭaka* record the term as '*dhammakāyo*.' But the PTS version writes '*dhammatanu*,' which has the same meaning as that of *dhammakāya*. The Pali term '*tanu*' generally refers to 'body' in the physical sense.

over the worldly side is demonstrated. According to the verses quoted, some points could be made as follows:

Verse 31 implies that Gotamī was ‘spiritually reborn’ to the noble clan through the realisation of truths, initiated with the teaching of the Buddha. Thus, the Buddha is her spiritual father. Such a declaration indicates her state of being a noble disciple, as her declaration of the emancipation affirms. The mention of ‘happiness of truths’ implies also that such a realisation brings about happiness.

In verse 32, she declares that her blameless or pleasurable *dhammakāya* was brought up by the Buddha. This has a number of implications regarding *dhammakāya*.

Firstly, the term *dhammakāya* in this passage is used as a substantive, not an adjective. At this point, it may be translated simply as the ‘*dhamma*-body’ - the general translation which covers all forms of the term’s meaning as a noun.[852] Secondly, the mention of ‘her *dhammakāya*’ implies its relation to her spiritual attainment, being her new personality corresponding to her spiritual new birth in the noble clan. Once obtained, it is ‘her *dhammakāya*.’ Thirdly, the statement that her *dhammakāya* was brought up (*saṃvaḍḍhita*) by the Buddha implies its different levels. It suggests that there are a number of levels of *dhammakāya*, and that the *dhammakāya* can be developed to the final perfection. Fourthly, her *dhammakāya* is regarded as blameless (*anindito*, *anindiyo*), or pleasurable (*ānandiyo*, *ānandito*). While more information is required in order to further analyse these aspects of *dhammakāya* precisely, at least some initial implications can be appreciated right away. For example, its quality as being blameless implies its completeness or perfection, and its quality as being pleasurable connotes joy, delight, or happiness. This could be related also to the happiness arisen from the realisation of truths, as mentioned in the previous verse.

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[852] Further discussion regarding more specific meanings of the term will be made later.

In verse 33, Gotamī is said to have been fed on the '*dhamma*-milk.'[853] Because it is fed to her by the Buddha, it is most likely that such 'milk' refers to his 'teaching.' However, its quality as 'unceasingly peaceful' indicates the state to which the teaching has brought her. That is to say, she is led from the initial introduction to the inner experience of the reality, so that she can eventually and actually 'taste' or realise it through her spiritual attainment. Rather than being sustenance to her physical body, the *dhamma*-milk is fed to nourish the growth of her *dhamma*-body (*dhammakāya*). Thus, in her declaration 'I was fed by you,' the 'I' refers here to her *dhamma*-body (*dhammakāya*) rather than her physical body. This expression implies her identification with the *dhammakāya*. It affirms the earlier statement that the *dhammakāya* is 'a new and now true personality'[854] that corresponds to her spiritual rebirth in the noble plane. This could also, in a way, clarify why the Buddha is designated '*dhammakāya*,' as mentioned earlier.[855] It implies his identification with *dhammakāya* from the time of his enlightenment. This is affirmed by the parallel usage of *dhammakāya* and *dhammabhūta* (become *dhamma*).

A conclusion regarding *dhammakāya* from this declaration may be made as follows:

1. The term *dhammakāya* is related with enlightenment. This agrees with our earlier observation regarding the relationship between the *dhammakāya* with the Buddha and with *Paccekabuddha*s.

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[853] '*Dhamma*-milk' is translated from '*dhammakhīraṃ*.' It is a *Kammadhāraya* compound and should be translated literally as 'milk that is *dhamma*.' However, in English usage, a simpler form '*dhamma*-milk' is also applicable, for it conveys the same meaning as 'milk that is *dhamma*.'

[854] This, in a way, suggests the similarity between the *dhammakāya* and *manomayakāya*; the former being the new personality obtained on the eradication of certain defilements, while the latter being the new personality obtained through certain progress of meditative experience. Further similarities are that both of them are conducive to the final realisation and that their plurality is mentioned or implied in the texts. Some scholars suggest the identification of these two types of body. For example, see Falk, *Nāma-Rūpa and Dharma-Rūpa*, op. cit., p. 144; Edward Crangle, "The Bodhisattva Intent: Guanyin and the Dynamics of Healing in Buddhist Meditation," in *Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara (Guanyin) and Modern Society*, ed. William Magee and Yi-hsun Huang (Taipei: Dharma Drum Publishing Corporation, 2006). Even so, the information from the canon seems insufficient to determine with certainty whether both titles refer to the same kind of 'body.'

[855] D.III.84.

2. *Dhammakāya* is not exclusive to the Buddha, but attainable[856] also by Buddhist disciples, and once obtained, it is 'his/her *dhammakāya*.'[857] Such a title precludes the interpretation of the term as 'teaching,' but allows an interpretation as 'quality.' Whereas the 'teaching' belongs generally to the Buddha, 'quality' can belong also to someone else. It is, then, understandable why some previous works usually ascribe only the meaning 'teaching' to the Sanskrit term *dharmakāya*. It is probably because they dealt only with the Buddha's *dharmakāya*, while ignoring the existence of disciples' *dharmakāya*, even though such an existence is evident also in traditional account(s) and even the early *Āgama*s.[858]

3. The *dhammakāya* can be brought up (*saṃvaḍḍhita*) - can be developed to a higher level. This implies that there are at least two different levels of *dhammakāya*, and the *dhammakāya* must be brought up until the highest perfection is met. This supports our earlier conclusion from the *Aggañña-sutta* that the term should refer to transcendental states, as there are many levels of such states, each of which being a 'whole' or 'totality' of transcendental qualities.

4. Unlike the *dhammakāya* in the *Aggañña-sutta* which can be translated as an adjective, *dhammakāya* in this passage is used strictly as a noun.[859] It may be

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[856] As observed in chapter 2 regarding 'seeing the *dhamma* and seeing the Buddha,' the transcendental *dhamma*s or *Nibbāna* which are regarded as the Buddha's essence are not exclusive to him, but accessible or attainable also to his disciple. These transcendental *dhamma*s are identified with *dhammakāya* in relation to Buddha and *Paccekabuddha*s, as discussed earlier.

Williams and Tribe, after a statement identifying the Buddha's *dhammakāya* with 'his teaching,' provide an alternative definitions that "[This true body is] the qualities the possession of which to their fullest degree made him a Buddha and that can still be attained by his followers." Williams and Tribe, op. cit., p. 173.

[857] See verse 32 above.

[858] Many research works have dealt with the Sanskrit term *dharmakāya* exclusively as one of the Buddha's three bodies (*Tri-kāya*) in Mahāyāna thought. However, no academic work to date has evaluated the Buddhist disciple's *dhammakāya*, even though it is evident that some of those works are well aware of its existence. Xing, for example, while acknowledging the fivefold *dharmakāya* evinced in the *Ekottarāgama*, states only briefly: "However, these are not exclusive to the Buddha but are shared by his great disciples such as Kāśyapa and Śāriputra." No discussion whatsoever is made afterward, probably because his work is focused on the Buddha's *dharmakāya* as one of the triad. Harrison, likewise, while mentioning a number of Chinese *Āgama* passages, neglects the references to the fivefold *dharmakāya*, perhaps also because those qualities are related to Arhats other than the Buddha.

[859] This contradicts Harrison's denial of the existence of a 'substantive' *dhammakāya* in early Buddhist usage. Harrison, op. cit., p. 50.

concluded, that any form of translation should be acceptable according to the context of the passage where the term is located.

With such characteristics of *dhammakāya* in this passage, the term *dhamma* in the compound should not convey the sense of 'teaching,' but 'transcendental reality' that is attainable and can be brought up to its perfection. Gotamī's mention of 'my *dhammakāya*' (*dhammakāyo mama*) seems to affirm also our earlier remark, that both the Buddha and his noble disciples have some properties or qualities in common. Such properties refer to *dhammakāya*(s). Thus, the great nun's mention of her *dhammakāya* suggests that she is 'an heir' by *dhamma*, and that such a title is gained perhaps on her acquisition of *dhammakāya*.

In the Mūlasarvāstivada *Vinayavastu*,[860] the elder Śroṇaḥ Koṭikarṇa who was a Stream-attainer (*sotāpanna*)[861] claims that he has seen the Buddha through *dhammakāya*, by the power of his master. This statement seems to support the above conclusion as well.

In the following, this study will examine canonical evidence corresponding to different levels of noble qualities, in order to gain more understanding regarding the different levels of *dhammakāya* implied in Gotamī's statement.

As stated earlier, Gotamī's claim regarding the 'growing up' of 'her *dhammakāya*' has two implications: 1) there are at least two different levels of *dhammakāya*, and 2) the *dhammakāya* must be brought up until the highest perfection is met. It is likely that at least the two levels of *dhammakāya* should refer to the states of trainees (*sekha*) and non-trainees (*asekha*). The former refers to states in which a further course is yet to be accomplished, while the latter requires no further course.

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[860] S. Bagchi, *Mulasarvāstivada Vinayavastu*, ed. P. L. Vaidya, vol. 2, Buddhist Sanskrit Texts (Darbhanga: Mithila Institute of Post-graduate Studies and Research in Sanskrit Learning, 1970), p. 167. This is the sole accessible reference of *dhammakāya* in other early Indian traditions, preserved in Indic character.

[861] At that time, he is explained as being a Stream-attainer (*sotāpanna*).

In the Pali canon, these two types of noble disciples are distinguished by qualities they possess. The text enumerates the tenfold quality (*dasa asekha-dhamma*)[862] that identifies a person as 'a non-trainee' (*asekha puggala*),[863] who is a virtuous one,[864] or a more-virtuous-than-virtuous one.[865] But sometimes, a trainee (*sekha*) is said also to possess the same ten qualities.[866] In this latter case, the ten qualities belonging to a 'non-trainee' (*asekha*) is differentiated by an addition of a qualitative '*asekha*,' meaning 'pertaining to a non-trainee,' which precedes the title of each of the ten qualities.[867] Likewise, the partial or entire practice of the four foundations of mindfulness differentiates between noble disciples as 'trainees' (*sekha*) and as 'non-trainees' (*asekha*). Thus, these qualities belonging to trainees (*sekha*) and to non-trainees (*asekha*) could characterise different levels of *dhammakāya*.

Still, a further classification of trainees can be made according to different transcendental paths and their corresponding fruits. As it is evident in the canon, a standard formula is usually employed to describe the assembly of noble disciples:

> supaṭipanno sāvakasaṅgho ujupaṭipanno sāvakasaṅgho ñāyapaṭipanno sāvakasaṅgho sāmījipaṭipanno sāvakasaṅgho yadidaṃ cattāri purisayugāni aṭṭha purisapuggalā esa bhagavato sāvakasaṅgho āhuneyyo pāhuneyyo dakkhiṇeyyo añjalīkaraṇīyo anuttaraṃ puññakkhettaṃ lokassa
>
> D.II.93-94, D.III.5, M.I.37, S.I.220.
>
> The assembly of the disciples is practising[868] the good path, practising the straight path, practising the true path, practising the appropriate path. That is, the four pairs of persons, the eight individuals. This assembly of the Blessed Lord's disciples is worthy of adoration, worthy of hospitality, worthy of offering, worthy of respect, the unsurpassed field of merit for the world.[869]

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[862] For details, see note 407.

[863] D.III.271, M.III.75-76.

[864] A.II.222.

[865] S.V.20. In this reference, a virtuous one is identified with a 'trainee' noble disciple. Therefore, a 'non-trainee' is said to be more virtuous.

[866] S.V.380-385. See p. 252, note 827.

[867] See, for example, M.I.446-447, A.V.221.

[868] Lit. 'traveling' or 'walking.'

[869] In the connection of *dhammakāya* with different levels of noble disciples, it may be useful to note a corresponding Chinese *Āgama* reference. In a particular passage of the *Dīrghāgamasūtra* (T.1.I.13b), corresponding to the 'mirror of truth' (*dhammādāsa*) discourse of the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* (D.II.93-94), the same formula regarding the quality of *Saṅgha* is

Herein, 'four pairs' or 'eight individual' persons are enumerated (*cattāri purisayugāni aṭṭha purisapuggalā*). The 'eight individuals' refer to eight levels of noble disciples where people who attain particular paths and fruits are enumerated separately.[870] The 'four pairs' are mentioned instead when particular paths and their corresponding fruits are collectively called under the same titles. Of the eight transcendental levels, the first to the seventh items refer to 'trainees,' while the last item refers to 'non-trainee.' In this context, different levels of *dhammakāya* may be referred to as pertaining to all these transcendental states.

This agrees entirely with our earlier observation that these transcendental paths and fruits as well as *Nibbāna* can be identified with *dhammakāya*. Gotamī's speech, that her *dhammakāya* has been 'brought up' (*saṃvaḍḍhita*), indicates the development of her *dhammakāya* from an initial state as a 'trainee.' This refers to any of the first seven levels. As far as a person is still a trainee (*sekha-puggala*), he/she still needs further development. Once he/she has attained the eighth state - the state of a non-trainee (*asekha-puggala*), no further growth is needed. This is one of the reasons why a general expression that is often found for an Arhat is 'exhausted is my rebirth, completed by me is the course of practice, done by me is what needs to be done, there is no further course for me

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recorded. The same qualities regarding four aspects of the right practice, as well as the same four pairs and eight individuals are mentioned. However, after the mention of the four aspects of the right practice and prior to the mention of four pairs and eight individuals, it is described in addition that the *Saṅgha* is 'endowed with *dhammakāya*,' following by a list of the eight noble disciples. This seems to confirm the identification of *dhammakāya* with eight transcendental states from the path of Stream-entry (*sotāpattimagga*) up to the fruit of Arhatship (*arahattaphala*).

For an English translation of this Chinese reference, see note 890.

[870] M.III.255, S.III.168.

The eight noble persons are as follows:

1. an Arhat or an emancipated one (*arahant*)
2. a farer of the fruit of Arhatship (*arahattaphalasacchikiriyāya paṭipanna*)
3. a Non-returner (*anāgāmī*)
4. a farer of the fruit of Non-returning (*anāgāmiphalasacchikiriyāya paṭipanna*)
5. a Once-returner (*sakadāgāmī*)
6. a farer of the fruit of Once-returning (*sakadāgāmiphalasacchikiriyāya paṭipanna*)
7. a Stream-attainer (*sotāpanna*)
8. a farer of the fruit of Stream-attaining (*sotāpattiphalasacchikiriyāya paṭipanna*)

to undertake.’[871] Therefore, we could say that *dhammakāya* needs to be developed until it reaches the final perfection.[872]

Nevertheless, on the way to the final goal, each level of *dhammakāya* of a ‘trainee’ could be said also to be ‘complete’ or ‘sufficient’ in regard to its function. For example, the *dhammakāya* that is identified above with the path to the Stream-attaining state (*sotāpattimagga*) is ‘sufficient’ in the eradication of the three lowest fetters as well as two kinds of proclivity (predisposition).[873] The *dhammakāya* conformable to the Once-returning state is sufficient for the eradication of the coarse part of the two next fetters as well as the coarse part of two other proclivities.[874] As such, it could be said that each level of *dhammakāya* is complete or sufficient in itself - to the extent that a certain degree of defilements can be uprooted. The *Guhaṭṭhaka-sutta-niddesa* elaborates that the mind of noble disciples of different levels are released from different sorts of defilements.[875] The *Paṭisambhidāmagga* explains further that different sorts of fetters are exhausted by different levels of the four noble paths (from the *sotāpattimagga* to *arahattamagga*).[876] Therefore, the totality of transcendental qualities constituting different transcendental states, which is identified earlier with *dhammakāya*, denotes a degree of self-sufficiency in eradicating different sorts of fetters.

This agrees with what was noted above, that the term *dhammakāya* is related to enlightenment, where the experience or the witness of realisation is required and the consequent transformation takes place. Once each kind of defilement is abandoned and eradicated, the noble disciple experiences happiness from release (*vimutti-sukha*), and the knowledge of such happiness (*ñāṇa*) arises.[877]

[871] P: *Khīṇā jāti vusitaṃ brahmacariyaṃ kataṃ karaṇīyaṃ nāparaṃ itthattāya*. D.I.84, D.II.153, M.I.40, M.I.392, etc.

[872] S.III.167-169.

[873] Proclivity regarding view and doubt (*diṭṭhānusaya*, *vicikicchānusaya*). Ps.I.71-72.

[874] Ps.I.73.

[875] Nd[1].27.

[876] Ps.I.96.

[877] Ps.I.195-196.

This corresponds to the great nun's claim of happiness arisen from realisation, and her expression that the *dhammakāya* is pleasurable.

To conclude, some further remarks regarding *dhammakāya* could be observed from this Pali passage. Firstly, *dhammakāya* is connected to enlightenment. Secondly, *dhammakāya* could be translated as a substantive, denoting the body that is identified with, or pertaining to, each of the transcendental states. Thirdly, Buddhist disciples can attain *dhammakāya*, and once so attained, it could be called 'his/her' *dhammakāya*. Fourthly, there are different levels of *dhammakāya*, each corresponding to a particular level of transcendental state, and, then, to each level of noble disciples accordingly. Fifthly, different levels of *dhammakāya* or transcendental reality, perform their functions in the abandonment and destruction of different sorts of defilements. They are then said to be self-sufficient or self-complete in performing their functions, and thus are said to be blameless. Sixthly, every time a defilement is abandoned and uprooted, happiness of release (*vimutti-sukha*), as well as the knowledge regarding one's release, arise. Therefore, each instance of realisation or enlightenment brings about happiness, and so *dhammakāya* is said to be pleasurable.

***Dhammakāya* demonstrated by the Buddha**

Another Pali passage that shows the relation of *dhammakāya* with the Buddha is found in the *Aṭṭhasandassakathera-apadāna*. But the relationship between them is ambiguous. Here, the whole story is the autobiography of the elder Aṭṭhasandassaka wherein he relates the meritorious deeds performed in one of his previous births, at the time of the Padumuttara Buddha.[878] The term *dhammakāya* appears in the expression of his appreciation in the Padumuttara Buddha. The elder, being Nārada brahmin at that time, praised the Padumuttara Buddha with the following three stanzas.

[878] Buddhist tradition holds that Arhat disciples in the time of the present historical Buddha have accumulated merit since the time of Padumuttara Buddha, who is the Buddha of a hundred thousand *kalpa*s ago. This may reflect a traditional belief that the time for persuing perfection (*pāramī*) in order to be released from the cycle of rebirth is a hundred thousand kalpas.

Satasahassatevijjā chaḷabhiññā mahiddhikā
parivārenti sambuddhaṃ ko disvā nappasīdati?

Ñāṇe upanidhā yassa na vijjati sadevake
anantañāṇaṃ sambuddhaṃ ko disvā nappasīdati?

Dhammakāyañca dīpentaṃ[879] kevalaṃ ratanākaraṃ
vikopetuṃ[880] na sakkonti ko disvā nappasīdati?

Ap.168.

A hundred thousand (monks) possessing the threefold knowledge, owning the sixfold superknowledge, and being endowed with great supernatural powers, are surrounding the enlightened one; who having seen him is not satisfied?

No one comparable to him in knowledge is found among human and gods; who, having seen the perfectly enlightened one whose knowledge is endless, is not satisfied?

No-one can upset the *dhamma*-bodied who is illuminating all around, being the mine of jewels; who having seen him is not satisfied?

In this praise, the term *dhammakāya* is found in the last stanza, which is the most ambiguous and difficult to translate. Difficulties involve the manifold meaning of each term, as well as the ambiguous structure of the verse. However, the survey of popular usage of each term in different instances helps to overcome the difficulties to some extent.

Generally, the term '*kevala*' could be translated either as 'only' or 'entirely.' It is observed that, whenever the term appears together with another word that conveys the meaning of 'emanating,' 'illuminating,' or 'enlarging,' the term *kevala* carries the meaning of 'entirely' or 'all around.' In this sentence, the word *kevala* comes immediately after the verb '*dīpentaṃ*' which conveys the meaning of 'illuminating.' It is thus translated here as 'all around.'

Another term that can convey different connotations is '*ratanākara*.' This term is found representing the '*Vinaya*'[881] that the venerable Upāli maintains. It represents also the venerable Ānanda[882] who is the treasurer of the *dhamma*. But sometimes it represents the Buddha.[883] As this verse is the praise of the

[879] CS version: *dīpentaṃ*; BJ version: *dipentaṃ*; PTS and SR versions: *dīpenti*.

[880] CS version and a Sinhalese mss: *vikappetuṃ*.

[881] Ap.I.93.

[882] Th.93.

[883] Ap.319.

Buddha, the term *dhammakāya* can be translated as an adjective, '*dhamma*-bodied,' qualifying the Padumuttara Buddha. In his recent study, which is the sole previous study that acknowledges the occurrence of *dhammakāya* in the *Apadāna* literature, Need agrees with this way of interpretation. He translates the term *dhammakāya* in the verse as an epithet of the Buddha.[884]

However, the ambiguous structure of the verse allows some space for alternative translations. Here, the terms *dhammakāya* and *ratanākara*, as well as the present participle *dīpenta*, are written in the same case, i.e., accusative. This allows the term *dhammakāya* to function either as the subject or object of *dīpenta*. In the former case, the *dhammakāya* functions also as an adjective, qualifying the Padumuttara Buddha, as in the tentative translation presented above. But in the case that *dhammakāya* functions as an object of *dīpenta*, it refers to 'what the Padumuttara Buddha demonstrates.' This gives an alternative translation of the last stanza of the above quote as follows:

> No-one can upset the (Padumuttara Buddha) the entire mine of jewels, who is demonstrating the *dhammakāya*; who having seen him is not satisfied?

In order to clarify further regarding the precise connotation of *dhammakāya* in this latter case, it would be useful to look at a Pali passage that refers to what the Buddha demonstrates.

In the *Sambuddha-sutta*, the Buddha explains that he demonstrates the path:

> Monks, the *Tathāgata*, who is the perfectly enlightened Arhat, has given rise to the path that had not risen, has generated the path that had not been generated, has proclaimed the path that had not been proclaimed. He is the path-knower, wise in the path, skilled in the path. Monks, but the disciples now are the path followers who live endowed with the path later.[885]

This suggests that the term *dhammakāya* in this passage, which is demonstrated or proclaimed by the Buddha, refers to 'the path' (*magga*). As is informed by the inter-related nature between the 'reality' and 'teaching,' it is possible that

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[884] Need, op. cit., p. 381.

[885] P: *Tathāgato bhikkhave arahaṃ sammāsambuddho anuppannassa maggassa uppādetā asañjātassa maggassa sañjānetā anakkhātassa maggassa akkhātā maggaññū maggavidū maggakovido. Maggānugā ca bhikkhave etarahi sāvakā viharanti pacchāsamannāgatā.* S.III.66.

the expression ‘the path’ may refer either to ‘reality realised’ or ‘prescriptive teaching’ that is the method to realisation. But the statement that monks ‘live endowed with the path’ suggests the former interpretation. A comparison of this passage with its parallel passage in the Chinese *Saṃyuktāgama* reinforces this point. The ‘*dhammakāya* as the path’ refers to the path that arises in the process of realisation and is instrumental to further and perfect enlightenment.[886] This suggests, again, the transcendental path.

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[886] The Chinese passage, which corresponds to the Pali *Sambuddha-sutta* mentioned above, is found in the *Saṃyuktāgamasūtra*. (T.99.II.186c) The earlier portion of the *sūtra* is the same as that in the Pali *sutta*. Herein, the Buddha declares the difference between himself and his Arhat disciples.

It is because the Buddha, without having listened to any *dharma*, could be self-enlightened with his own wisdom, that is, by giving rise to the wisdom of *dharmakāya*, attaining the perfect enlightenment (*sammā-sambodhi*), and proclaiming the ‘right *dharma*’ for the sake of the listeners’ realisation. He is, therefore, known as ‘the incomparable perfectly enlightened one.’

Following this explanation is a verse resembling that in the Pali canon - a kind of repetition found throughout the text.

From the context described, three points regarding the term *dharmakāya* can be noted. Firstly, this passage refers to the *dharmakāya* of the Buddha. Secondly, the *dharmakāya* is said to arise in the process of realisation. Thirdly, from the order of events depicted, it is likely that the *dharmakāya* is explained as instrumental to the Buddha’s perfect enlightenment.

This Chinese passage is meaningful on its own. Besides, comparing it with the Pali *Sambuddha-sutta* above will give also a clearer picture regarding the ‘path demonstrated by the Buddha’ as described in the Pali canon.

Indeed, on reading the Pali text alone, one may not gain much impression other than that the Buddha is the path discoverer and revealer, while his listeners are the followers of the path (*magga*). Although the three titles - the ‘path knower,’ ‘wise in the path,’ and ‘skilled in the path’ - could suggest the Buddha’s great familiarity with ‘the path,’ it is still far from being connected clearly with his own enlightenment. In other words, nothing obvious is mentioned about the importance of the path to the Buddha himself regarding his enlightenment. Thus, simply reading this Pali passage alone, one may interpret ‘the path’ as merely ‘teaching’ - the word of mouth that he prescribes to his disciples. It is the ‘teaching’ that is articulated by the Buddha, prescribed to his disciples for their practice and eventual enlightenment. Thus, it is called ‘the path.’

But once the two versions of the *sutta* are compared, the meanings of both ‘the path’ and the ‘*dhammakāya*’ become clearer, as in the table below.

step	**Pali *Saṃyutta-nikāya***	**Chinese *Saṃyuktāgama***
1	The Buddha gives rise to the path.	The Buddha gives rise to the wisdom of *dharmakāya*.
2	The Buddha generates the path.	The Buddha attains the perfect enlightenment.
3	The Buddha proclaims the path.	The Buddha preaches the right *dharma* for the listeners’ enlightenment.

From the table, it can be observed that, the Pali expression of the passage does not make distinct ‘the path’ in these three occurrences, while the Chinese version expresses clearly the successive steps from the Buddha’s own enlightenment and how his teaching arises, using different terms in each step.

The term *dhammakāya* in the Chinese version stands for ‘the path’ at the level of enlightenment - the path that arises during the process of realisation and which, in turn, gives rise to further realisation. ‘The path as prescriptive teaching’ is distinguished in the Chinese version by using a different title, ‘the right *dharma*.’

Although the Pali version of this *sutta* does not obviously correlate ‘the path’ with the Buddha’s realisation, as we recollect from the *Dhammacakkappavattana-sutta*, such a relation is attested. The path is, in fact, essential for the process of his enlightenment, according to the *sutta*.

Here, a distinction of the different levels of the “path” is required. The path or *dharmakāya* that arises in the process of realisation cannot be the mundane, but the transcendental or noble, path. Therefore, the term *dharmakāya* in this Chinese passage refers to the “noble path.” This, on the one hand, could mean the four levels of noble path from the *sotāpattimagga* to the *arahattamagga*. On the other hand, it could be equated with the noble eightfold path in supramundane level where its last constituent, namely, the right concentration (*sammāsamādhi*), is fully supported by the first seven constituents and thus engenders further enlightenment. (The broad classification of the noble eightfold path into two levels, namely, the mundane (*lokiya*) and the transcendental (*lokuttara*), are described in detail in the *Mahācattārīsaka-sutta* of the *Majjhima-nikāya*.

On the whole, our study of the term *dhammakāya* in early references, mainly in the Pali canon and supplemented by the Chinese *Āgama* references, suggests that the term refers to transcendental states, i.e., four paths and their corresponding fruits as well as *Nibbāna*.

To understand how the term *dhammakāya* becomes identified with 'teaching,' the following observation on Chinese materials may help clarify this to a certain extent.

Dhammakāya as the Buddha's Teaching

In this connection, a study of Chinese *Āgama* references according to their chronology may contribute to a clearer understanding of how the term *dhammakāya* later become identified with 'teaching.' It is observed that *dhammakāya* in an exclusive sense of teaching is found only in later portions of the *Āgama*s.[887]

In the Chinese *Āgama*s, the term *fa-shen* is found mainly in four parts:[888] 1) in the *Dīrghāgamasūtra*, 2) in the *Saṃyuktāgama*, 3) in the *Ekottarāgama*, and 4) in a few independent *sūtra*s. The meanings of the term *fa-shen* found in each *Āgama* seem to have their own particular characteristics.

In what follows, the Chinese references are classified into 2 groups, according to their age.

M.III.71-78.) In detailed analysis, it could be said that the four noble paths (from *sotāpattimagga* to *arahattamagga*) and the noble eightfold path are, in fact, not distinct. Because all levels of the four paths must be possessed of these eight constituents, of different degrees of completeness and profundity. (The resemblance or similarity between the four levels of noble paths, from *sotāpattimagga* to *arahattamagga*, and the noble eightfold path is evident in the Pali canon. For example, both sets of noble paths are said to contribute to the elimination of defilements. M.I.55. Cf. Ps.I.94. Also, different levels of the noble eightfold path are mentioned in the canon. For example, see M.I.300.)

[887] Generally, the *Āgama* references are regarded as 'old evidence regarding early Buddhist teachings,' especially those presented as the direct discourses of the Buddha. However, some passages show indications of having been incorporated later. Examples include passages such as the independent *Aśokasūtra* in which the event occurs during the reign of King Aśoka, about two or three centuries after the time of the Buddha. Another example is the introductory part of the *Ekottarāgama*, where the word 'Mahāyāna' appears many times, and where explanations regarding the Buddha show strong signs of Mahāyāna thought. An emphasis is placed on the Bodhisattva-practice and emptiness (*sunyatā*), which are generally regarded as typical Mahāyāna characteristics. The proclaimation of the six perfections supports this remark. This is evident throughout the introductory section of the Chinese translation of the *Ekottarāgama*.

[888] Note that this study has dropped out some other references that appear to be possibly mistranslated and those that are identified as being Mahāyāna references.

1) In older parts of the *Āgama*s[889]

In the *Dīrghāgama*, the sole occurrence of the term *fa-shen* (*dharmakāya*) signifies specifically eight kinds of noble disciples**,** from those who have entered to the path of the Stream-attaining state (*sotāpattimagga*) to those who have attained the fruit of Arhatship (*arahattamagga*).[890]

The older portion of the *Saṃyuktāgama* refers to *fa-shen* (*dharmakāya*) as an attribute arising in the process of realisation, and is instrumental to the perfect enlightenment for the Buddha. This seems to refer to the 'noble path.'[891]

In the older portion of the *Ekottarāgama*,[892] the *dhammakāya* is found in two different meanings: the five qualities constituting the *dhammakkhandha*,[893] and the essense of *dhamma* that remains after the Buddha's passing.[894]

2) In later parts of the *Āgama*s

In the later portion of the *Saṃyuktāgama*[895] and the later part of the *Ekottarāgama*,[896] the term *dhammakāya* signifies the Buddha's verbal teaching memorised by the venerable Ānanda.

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[889] 'Older parts' are determined by evidence that they are discourses from the time of the Buddha and that there is no sign of Mahāyāna typical characteristics in the context.

[890] T.1.I.13b.

This *Āgama* reference corresponds to a passage in the Pali *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta*. The context explains the qualities of the noble *Saṅgha*. The Chinese translation says:

> [The monks] are pleased, delighted and confident in the *Saṅgha*: "[The *Saṅgha* of the Blessed one's well-directed disciples] live well in harmony; their conduct is upright without flattery; they have achieved fruits of the way to liberation; among them seniors and juniors show mutual respect for one another; they have accomplished *dharmakāya*. [They are] those who have entered upon the way to the realisation of the fruit of Stream-entry, who are Stream-enterers, who have entered upon the way to the realisation of the fruit of Once-return, who are Once-returners, who have entered upon the way to the realisation of the fruit of Non-return, who are Non-returners, who have entered upon the way to the realisation of the fruit of Arhatship and who are Arhats; that is to say the four pairs of persons, the eight kinds of individuals. All of them are noble disciples of the Blessed one, who are worthy of veneration, and the field of merit in the world.

Cf. note 869.

[891] T.99.II.186c. Cf. note 886.

[892] This refers to the text of the *Ekottarāgama*, excluding the introductory part.

[893] T.125.II.711b-c, T.125.II.772c. This refers to the fivefold *dharma*-body (五分法身), i.e., virtue (*sīla*), concentration (*samādhi*), wisdom (*paññā*), release (*vimutti*), and the knowledge that one has been released (*vimutti-ñāṇadassana*).

[894] T.125.II.787b. Here, it is briefly stated, "Although the mortal body (of the Buddha) extinguishes, the *dharma*-body remains. This is its nature."

From the above observation, the change of notions of the *dhammakāya* over time is observed in the Chinese *Āgama*s. In the older part of the canon, the term refers mainly to eight kinds of noble disciples or the qualities related to enlightenment. This agrees with the term's notion found in Pali references. The sole reference in the body of the *Ekottarāgama* text which refers to *dhamma* that remains after the Buddha's passing seems obscure. On the one hand, it can be regarded as still in line with the other old references, for the term refers to the essence of the Buddha that is the incorruptible *dhamma*. On the other hand, it is likely that the expression of this kind gives rise to further elaboration that the *dhammakāya* refers to the teaching that remains. As observed, this expression is found frequently in the later *Āgama*s and early Mahāyāna texts which further elaborate that the *dharmakāya* refers to the Buddha's verbal teaching. Without a clear differentiation between the early and later texts, we can hardly notice such a fine distinction between their expressions. It seems probable that the '*dhammavinaya*'[897] mentioned in the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* becomes identified with the Buddha's *dhammakāya* by means of the elaboration made in this manner.

In later portions of the Chinese *Āgama*s, *fa-shen* (*dharmakāya*) is used more in the sense of 'teaching.' Later, this comes to be misunderstood among scholars as the main concept of *dhammakāya* in the early Buddhist period.[898]

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[895] T.99.II.168b. Xing identifies this as corresponding to the independent *Aśokasūtra*, and notes that it must be of very late origin, for it refers to King *Asoka* whose reign was around two centuries later than the time of the Buddha. Cf. Xing, op. cit., p. 74.

[896] T.125.II.549c. A number of occurrences of *fa-shen* is found in this reference. It refers to the introductory part of the *Ekottarāgama* which Xing claims as late: "It is strongly arguable that the Chinese *Ekottarāgama* was revised by later compliers as some Mahāyāna elements are found in it." Xing, op. cit., p. 74.

In making such a claim, Xing refers to the *Ekottarāgama* as a whole. However, it is observed that the context of the body of the same *Āgama* contains the teaching of different nature from that found in its introductory part. (See note 893-894 for the context of the body of the *Ekottarāgama*.) That the introductory part is added later seems to be normal and should be understandable. As is common for the compilation of a Buddhist text, an introductory part is usually added to the text. It is usually written in verse form and the context is to praise the Buddha and/or his *dhamma* and the *Saṅgha*. While the whole text can be the reproduction or a translation of an old text, the introductory part is usually newly added by the compiler or the translator. That being the case, in the *Ekottarāgama*, only introductory part contains those 'Mahāyāna elements.'

[897] This refers to the discipline laid down, and the teaching taught, by the Buddha collected together.

[898] Dutt, Mahāyāna Buddhism, op. cit.; Gombrich, "The Buddha's Book of Genesis?," op. cit.; Harrison, op. cit.; Xing, op. cit.

The use of the term in the sense of 'teaching' has been developed further in Mahāyāna Buddhism. The term is brought to the equation with scriptural tradition, the most obvious of which is demonstrated by the worship of the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā* literature,[899] and some expressions in the Chinese *Abhidharma*.[900]

Considering these *Āgama* references against the connotations of *dhammakāya* in the Pali canon, the overall picture regarding *dhammakāya* in the early Buddhist period becomes clearer. As Falk expresses:

> … the tenet of the dharmakāya was deprived of its transcendental implications and came to be considered as a mere allegorical formulation of the fact that after the Master's final disappearance the body of the Sayings was left to guide the later generations of disciples.[901]

The *dhammakāya* which originally refers to transcendental *dhamma*s has lost its transcendental aspects and become understood as a mere metaphorical way of referring to the collected Buddha's verbal teaching that takes over the role of the teacher after his demise.

Relative Significance of *Dhamma* and *Kāya*

As discussed earlier regarding the omission in previous scholarship, a number of scholars claim the insignificance of the component *kāya* in the interpretation of the compound term *dhammakāya*. Thus, the term *kāya* in this instance is interpreted as a 'collection.' This section re-evaluates the import of the term *kāya* in this particular compound.

While it is true that the term *kāya* can be used in the sense of collection, and that such a meaning may be identified as its literal meaning, it seems unlikely

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899 See Kajiyama, op. cit., for example.

900 For example, see T29, 248c. In this *Abhidharma* literature, the term *dharmakāya* is equated with Buddha's teaching and discipline. To cause a break within the Sangha is said to be the heaviest sin, since it means to harm the *dhammakāya* of the Buddha. This is even more serious than harming the Buddha's physical body. Thus, in the *Abhidharma* age, the term *dhammakāya* was used more obviously in the sense of teaching.

901 Falk, *Namā-Rūpa and Dharma-Rūpa*, op. cit., p. 167.

to be the case for the compound *dhammakāya* as it is used in the early Buddhist texts.

As discussed in the third chapter of this work, while the meaning 'body' and 'collection' convey the same sense of a composite structure, the functions of both types of assemblage are different. The meaning of *kāya* as a 'collection' provides the static sense of something collected together. It does not give any sense of relationship, either among the individual member of the group or between the individual members with the 'totality' of the group. As such, individual members are regarded as being 'independent' of the group. In contrast, the translation 'body,' while giving similar sense of composite nature or even less, carries with it the dynamic or living sense of the whole composition. In the latter case, the sense of 'totality' is necessary in order to retain the function either of its individual members or of the whole composite. Such a distinction has been established, in the chapter 3, as a criterion for the evaluation of any types of complex in order to determine whether their appropriate meaning would be 'body' or 'collection.'

The compound term *dhammakāya* in early Buddhist usage generally refers to, or links the Buddha to, transcendental paths and fruits, or the corresponding eight noble disciples, or *nibbāna*. This is defined by their functions such as being a particular level of defilement uprooter. At the same time, these transcendental states indicate the level of quality or identity of the persons who possess them. In other words, in order to identify a person as a noble disciple of any level, such a person must be possessed of 'qualities' (*dhamma*s) sufficient to that nominated level.

With such a definition of *dhammakāya*, as a living or functioning composite of particular qualities, the component '*dhamma'* is certainly of great import, as the type of '*dhamma*' itself determine the type of function or quality of the 'whole composite.' At the same time, the sense of the 'wholeness' or 'totality' is also essential, as it is the criterion that determines the efficacy of such a function or

quality. This work, therefore, suggests the translation of '*kāya*' as 'body' rather than any kind of 'collection' in the compound term *dhammakāya*, as the word 'body' covers all aspects of the 'entirety' or 'unbroken completeness.'

Moreover, each level of Buddhist nobility, or each transcendental state, corresponds to its 'function' as a defilement-uprooter,[902] or whatever function it may have in order to retain the person in that state of nobility and prevent him/her from 'falling away' from it. In order to allow each *dhammakāya* as a 'transcendental state' (*dhamma*) to perform such a function properly, the 'wholeness' (*kāya*) of its qualities is necessary. As such, of the two components of the term *dhammakāya*, namely, '*dhamma*' and '*kāya*,' equal emphasis must be shared.[903]

This work, therefore, suggests flexible translation of the substantive *dhammakāya*, either as 'body that is *dhamma*,' 'body of *dhamma*' or 'body of *dhamma*s;' where the plural *dhamma*s refer to 'transcendental qualities' pertaining to each level of Buddhist nobility, and the singular refers to each 'transcendental state' that is identified with the body itself. Hence, it is not wrong to maintain that the term *dhammakāya* is a 'transcendental body.'[904]

In this manner, each level of *dhammakāya* could be said to be 'complete' or 'sufficient' in itself to function properly in accordance with the transcendental level it belongs. The manner of 'raising' the *dhammakāya* to a higher level, as described by the great nun Gotamī, could be said to make it even more complete. Therefore, there is no 'incomplete' *dhammakāya*, but only the 'complete,' 'more complete,' 'even more complete,' and 'perfectly complete.' Hence, each *dhammakāya* is *ānandiyo* 'pleasurable' or *anindito* 'blameless,'

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902 The function of these transcendental states in uprooting or abandoning defilements is elaborated partly at Ps.I.94. This was discussed earlier.

903 The mention of *dhammakāya* as 'the body that witnesses' the eight deliverances (*vimokkhas*), as discussed in Chapter 3, even provides a stronger sense of 'living and functioning body' as an interpretation of the term *dhammakāya*.

904 Even though some scholars have identified this translation or interpretation as 'ill-defined,' [Harrison, op. cit.] it is clarified that such a claim results from their misunderstanding regarding the early notions of the term.

with the balanced significance of its two components, namely, *dhamma* and *kāya*.

Conclusion

This fourth chapter attempted to bridge the gap in previous scholarship regarding the interpretation of *dhammakāya* in early Buddhism. Two particular omissions are concerned, namely, the oversimplification of the context of the Pali passage and the incomplete data employed in the interpretation of the early meaning of the term. This has accounted for previous scholarly interpretations of the early Buddhist *dhammakāya* as 'collection of teaching' or 'body of *dhamma*s' where the term body provides the simple sense of 'collection.'

In order to resolve the problem, the chapter has first identified three forms of possible translations of the term *dhammakāya* from a linguistic viewpoint. It then lists all occurrences of the compound term *dhammakāya* as found in the Pali canon. The work utilised the term's occurrences both in the *Aggañña-sutta* and the Pali *Apadāna* literature - the latter is rarely mentioned in any previous studies. The chapter discussed all four occurrences of the compound *dhammakāya* according to Buddhist philosophy embedded in the Pali canon. This is aided by the information and arrangement done in the two previous chapters.

The chapter undertook a further study of the *Aggañña-sutta* passage of which the context was mostly overlooked in previous studies. The analysis of the passage was done according to three particular implications. The first point is the description of the 'true son' of the Buddha. The chapter has argued that the mention of the unshakable confidence in the Buddha, as the 'true son' possesses, indicates the true son's quality that he is a noble disciple who has witnessed the realisation of truth and become independent in regard to his understanding and confidence in the Buddhist teaching. This was done by

referring to the documentation of qualities of a noble disciple made in the chapter 2.

In turn, the identification of this 'true son' as being a noble disciple has been employed for further analysis regarding the parallel description of monks (noble disciples) and brahmins. It was observed that previous interpretation of '*dhamma'* in the compound term *dhammakāya* as 'teaching' results from scholarly focus on the initial description of Buddhist disciple as 'born of mouth.' The chapter argued that this is an oversimplification of the context. Because the context of the whole passage is complex, i.e., its semantic depth at different points is not flat. From the analysis of the parallel descriptions of the spiritual birth of monks and mythical birth of brahmins, the study proposed that the term '*dhamma'* in question is comparable to brahmanical Brahmā, the creator. This refers to transcendental paths and fruits as well as *nibbāna*, the realisation of which can transform the practitioner from a worldly person (*puthujjana*) to a noble disciple (*ariyasāvaka*). Applying the criterion provided in the chapter 3 regarding the consideration of the appropriate interpretation of '*kāya*' at a particular instance, the chapter proposed the translation of *kāya* in the compound *dhammakāya* as 'body.' This was done in accordance with the functioning nature of the *kāya* in question.

As a supplementary to the overall discussion, the study observed further implications from the parallel usage of the term *dhamma* and *brahma* in the four designations of the Buddha. Even though both terms can be used in different connotations, whenever they are found in parallel, they refer to the state of 'highest purity.' The description of that state as being free from passion and defilements suggests its identification with *nibbāna*. Further, the explanation of an Arhat as 'living with his self become *brahma*' (*brahmabhūtena attanā*) affirms the identification of '*brahma'* in question with *nibbāna*. This supplements the conclusion of *dhammakāya* in the *Aggañña-sutta* as referring to transcendental states, from the path of Stream-attaining to

the fruit of emancipation, and *nibbāna*. The work proposed the translation of the compound *dhammakāya* either as an adjective or as a noun. As an adjective, the term is to be translated as ‘having *dhamma* as body.’ As a noun, it can be translated either as ‘body that is *dhamma*,’ body of (pertaining to) *dhamma*, or body of *dhamma*s.

The second Pali occurrence of the term *dhammakāya* is related to *Paccekabuddha*s, the self-enlightend ones. The surroundings suggest that the term performs an adjectival function qualifying *Paccekabuddha*s. The comparison of the adjectival *dhammakāya* of *Paccekabuddha*s with that of the Buddha reinforces the impossibility of rendering the term as ‘teaching.’

The third Pali occurrence concerns the *dhammakāya* and a noble disciple. Herein, the *dhammakāya* appears as a noun and is regarded as a new personality acquired on the realisation of truth. The *dhammakāya* is explained as pleasurable and blameless. The mention of the development of *dhammakāya* implies possible different states. A Chinese reference in the *Dīrghāgama* explains the qualities of the noble disciples (*ariya-saṅgha*) as being endowed with *dhammakāya*, and elaborates the *dhammakāya* by means of the 8 transcendental states, from the path of Stream-attaining to the fruit of emancipation.

The last ambiguous Pali reference to *dhammakāya* may be interpreted as the *dhammakāya* demonstrated by the Buddha or *dhammakāya* as a designation of the Buddha. Comparing this with a corresponding passage where the Buddha identifies himself as being the person who demonstrates the path, the *dhammakāya* is then identified with the path. Accompanied by the parallel Chinese *Āgama* reference wherein the path is described as arising during the process of enlightenment and is instrumental to further realisation, this path is then identified with ‘transcendental path.’ This supports earlier conclusion regarding other Pali references.

A small part on the different connotations of *dhammakāya* in the Chinese *Āgama*s was then proposed in order to outline the possible difference of the term's usage along the course of time, especially the use of the term in an exclusive sense of teaching. The study observed that the term *dharmakāya* in older portions of Chinese *Āgama*s carries similar meanings to those of the Pali references, i.e., *dhammakāya* related to the process of enlightenment. However, in the later parts, the term *dharmakāya* comes to carry the exclusive connotation as 'teaching.' This later meaning of *dharmakāya* has been misunderstood by some previous studies to be general connotation of the term in early Buddhist usage. This may be understood as a consequence of the generalisation in regard to different instances of the term *dharmakāya*. The study proposed that, by means of the differentiation of the context of *dharmakāya* found in different instances, the delineation of semantic development of the term is possible.

In this final step, the chapter concludes the meaning and significance of *dhammakāya* in early Buddhist references. First, the mention of *dhammakāya* as belonging to *Paccekabuddha*s and noble disciples indicates its accessibility to all types of Buddhist nobles. That is, *dhammakāya* is not exclusive to the Buddha.

Secondly, in all Pali references, the term *dhammakāya* is used in the sense of transcendental paths and fruits and *nibbāna* that is the essence of the Buddha which is accessible also to his disciples. The term's usage in the old portions of Chinese *Āgama*s is in line with its Pali usage. However, in later parts of the *Āgama*s, the term comes to be used in an exclusive sense of Buddha's teaching that the venerable Ānanda has memorised.

Thirdly, rather than being a 'collection' in general sense, the term *dhammakāya* carries the sense of living and functioning *dhamma* so that its appropriate translation is 'body' rather than 'collection.' Besides, its connotation as 'body' is significant in that it retain the sense of 'totality' or 'entirety' of all constituent

qualities. This is essential for its function either in the eradication of fetters or in the maintaining the individual in that particular noble state. At the same time, its former constituent, namely, *dhamma* is also significance for the identification of each *dhammakāya*. Thus, the study proposes the balanced emphasis on both components of the term *dhammakāya*.

Finally, the study observed some similarities between the *dhammakāya* and *manomayakāya*, both are regarded as being a new personality arising on the eradication of certain fetters or on the acquisition of certain mental progress. Also, the acquisition of both of them is regarded as that which is instrumental to or beneficial for the final realisation. However, the canonical information seems insufficient to conclude whether these two kinds of body can be identical. After all, the connotation of *dhammakāya* as transcendental states renders it essential and instrumental to the enlightenment of Buddhist nobles of all types and levels.

This work, therefore, maintains that the *dhammakāya* in early Buddhism possesses no less significance than the *dharmakāya* in Mahāyāna Buddhism, although its connotations in the two traditions could be different.

Chapter 5
CONCLUSION

This research has re-evaluated the significance of the term *dhammakāya* in early Buddhist usage. It has examined the various meanings of the term, as well as those of its two components, namely, *dhamma* and *kāya*. This was performed in accordance with the particular academic questions mentioned in the introductory chapter. The examination and re-evaluation of aspects of those terms relied mainly on an investigation and analysis of early canonical passages. The interpretation was performed according to early Buddhist philosophy as embedded in the Pali canon. The study concludes that, the *dhammakāya*, being instrumental to the process of enlightenment, is significant in the early Buddhist period.

In accordance with the omissions in previous scholarship identified in the first chapter, the second chapter undertook a study of the term *dhamma*. The study of its various meanings demonstrates the diverse aspects and ambiguous nature of the term. This ambiguity probably has accounted for the generalisation of the term *dhamma* in different senses, which influences the further interpretation of *dhammakāya*. The chapter noted also the dynamic and functional nature of *dhamma*s mentioned in previous studies. Thus, scholars propose different renderings of the term, as 'force,' 'event,' 'phenemenon,' or the like. Two main aspects of *dhamma*, as 'teaching' and 'truth,' i.e., the reality/ies that teachings refer to, are always interwined. This study has attempted to differentiate them to an extent. In turn, this method of differentiation was employed in the interpretation of particular Pali passages that are cited frequently as being references to *dhammakāya*.

Then, the chapter discussed some rarely mentioned aspects of *dhamma* that are relevant to the interpretation of *dhammakāya*. The discussion dealt mainly with *dhamma* in the sense of 'teaching' and 'truth.' It illustrates that these each have

their functions. The study has argued that the efficacy of *dhamma*s in the sense of 'teaching' depends on practice. In other words, their effectiveness cannot be reached unless they are internalised. In regard to the two aspects of teaching, namely, descriptive and prescriptive, the study argued that the latter is predominant in Buddhist teaching. Its prescriptive aspect furthers the sense of 'soteriological imperative.' That is, in whatever level a particular practice will be classed, it needs to be practised in the manner that leads to enlightenment. The study discussed also about *dhamma*s to be realised in the process of enlightenment and the manner in which they are realised. Finally in the second chapter, the study discussed two levels of relationship between the Buddha and *dhamma*s. *Dhamma* as teaching takes the Buddha's role as 'the teacher' after his *parinibbāna*. *Dhamma* that is both 'reality realised' and 'quality acquired' represents the Buddha's incorruptible essence. The study argued that only *dhamma* in this latter case can be equated with the Buddha as in the famous statement 'he who sees *dhamma* sees the Buddha; he who sees the Buddha sees the *dhamma*.'

Another omission observed in previous scholarship regarding the interpretation of *dhammakāya* concerns the interpretation of its latter component, '*kāya*.' This was dealt with in chapter 3, the nature of which is illustrative rather than conclusive.

According to the gap identified in earlier studies, two main aspects of the term *kāya* - 'body' and 'collection' - are differentiated. The chapter proposed a criterion by which these two aspects of *kāya* can be distinguished. It was concluded that, even though both 'body' and 'collection' can be equal in regard to their composite structure, they carry different senses of 'function.'

The expression 'collection' conveys the sense of 'something collected together.' It thus can represent any group either of things or of beings. Nevertheless, such an expression does not convey any sense of 'function.' It represents the type of group in which individual members or elements are

independent. In other words, the group functions as a mere 'collective title' of its individual members.

In contrast, while a 'body' can be understood as a 'collection' by its complex structure, it carries a sense of 'function' which is beyond the scope of a mere collection. It represents the type of 'group' to which individual members or constituents are dependent on the 'totality' or 'wholeness' of the group. In other words, individual members can retain their function or identify as long as they are still 'held' in the 'functioning body,' or that 'living wholeness.' If a particular constituent is 'removed' from this 'entirety,' its identity or function does not remain. The same holds true for the case that the 'wholeness' of the 'body' collapses.

In order to exemplify the different uses of the term, all kinds of 'body' and 'collection' that entitled '*kāya*' were listed and discussed briefly, along with examples provided in the Pali canon. The clear distinction between different modes of relationship between individual members or constituents and the 'totality' is illustrated by means of a diagram. The study listed various aspects of body found in the canon. Different types of body are mentioned, from the physical body of a human up to the mind-made body of a deity in the form-meditation realm (*rūpāvacara*). 'Further self' of the formless-meditative (*arūpāvacara*) deity was incorporated also to exhaust the 'body' as distinct from 'mind' of deities in all categories. Different kinds of body arising through the power of highly concentrated mind are mentioned.

The study observed in particular a type of 'body' obtained on the accomplishment of certain levels of mental progress, namely, the mind-made body (*manomaya-kāya*). It argues that this kind of body represents a 'new personality' by which the consciousness of the meditator is transferred from the physical body during the attainment of that meditative state. The mention of mind-made body in the plural, as in the venerable Cullapanthaka's utterance, implies the possibility of many bodies of this kind arising in the same manner.

As the creation of this mind-made body is depicted in the canon apart from the creation of various bodies through the meditator's psychic power, the study argued that they are distinct. It is likely that the practice of 'calling up' this mind-made body could be prescribed as a meditative practice contributive to further mental practice up to final enlightenment. The Buddha's discourse delivered to the brahmin Udāyi seems to support this point.

A particular type of noble disciples who are superior in *samādhi* faculty (*samādhindriya*) deserves special mention. This type of noble disciples is defined as the meditator who has witnessed various meditative states, including the deathless realm (*amata-dhātu*), with 'body.' Nevertheless, there is no clear evidence in the Pali canon as to which kind of 'body' is instrumental in this regard. A Chinese *Āgama* reference seems to point to *dhammakāya*. Nevertheless, the word order in the translation, compared with that in the Pali parallel, makes it speculative that the word '*fa-shen*' (*dhammakāya*) might have occurred due to a translating mistake.

The observation of various kinds and aspects of 'body' and 'collection' is significant in that it allows researchers to broaden the possibility of alternative interpretations of *dhammakāya*. At the same time, it strengthens the understanding regarding the similarity and difference between the two principal meanings of *kāya* - 'body' and 'collection,' which is necessary in determining the appropriate interpretation of the term *dhammakāya*.

The fourth chapter studied the direct canonical references to *dhammakāya*. All the four Pali passages are studied in detail. Different references represent the relationship between the *dhammakāya* and different types of Buddhist nobles, namely, the Buddha, *Paccekabuddha*s, and noble disciples.

The relationship of the Buddha and *dhammakāya* is presented in the *Aggañña-sutta*, where the *dhammakāya* is regarded as a designation of the Buddha. The chapter analyses the passage according to the three main implications. The

description of the ‘true son’ as possessing the unshakable confidence in the Buddha indicates his state as being a noble disciple, at least a Stream-attainer (*sotāpanna*).

The parallel description of monks (noble disciples) and brahmins as well as the spiritual paternity of the Buddha and mythical fatherhood of Brahmā leads to an identification of the Buddha with *dhamma* and Brahmā. The study argues that the *dhamma*, which is comparable to the creator Brahmā, must possess a transforming capacity that alters a worldly person (*puthujjana*) into a noble disciple (*ariyasāvaka*). This should refer to transcendental *dhamma*.

The parallel usage of the term *dhamma* and *brahma* in the four designations of the Buddha suggests their identification with the state of ‘highest purity,’ i.e., *nibbāna*. Since the interpretation of *dhamma* in the passage as transcendental *dhamma* was performed against its effective function, the chapter proposed the translation of *kāya* in the compound *dhammakāya* as ‘body.’

The relationship between the *dhammakāya* and *Paccekabuddha*s, which is expressed with a similar compound as that in the *Aggañña-sutta*, rejects the possibility of the interpretation of the term *dhamma* in both instances as ‘teaching.’ *Paccekabuddha*s are neither teachers nor students. *Dhamma* as ‘teaching’ is, thus, not applicable to them.

With respect to the relationship of the *dhammakāya* with a noble disciple, the expression regarding *dhammakāya* indicates its property as a new personality acquired on the realisation of truth that brings about happiness. The mention of the ‘growth’ of *dhammakāya* implies the possibility of its different levels. This is reinforced by a Chinese parallel to the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* that depicts the noble disciples (*ariya-saṅgha*) as endowed with *dhammakāya*, and elaborates the *dhammakāya* as eight transcendental states, from the path of Stream-attaining to the fruit of emancipation.

The other Pali reference refers to *dhammakāya* as demonstrated by the Buddha. Comparing this with other corresponding Pali and Chinese passages, *dhammakāya* should be identified with 'transcendental path,' that arises during the process of enlightenment and is instrumental to further realisation.

Through a study of all Chinese *Āgama* passages with special attention paid to their different antiquity, it is clearer how the term *dhammakāya* is used at a later date in an exclusive sense of teaching. In the older parts, *dhammakāya* is depicted as being related to the process of enlightenment, similar to its meanings employed in Pali references.

In all references to *dhammakāya* in early Buddhist usage, it is apparent that *dhammakāya* is linked always with the process of enlightenment in one way or another. Its relation with the Buddhist noble ones of all types is evident in the early Buddhist texts. That is to say, *dhammakāya* is not exclusive to the Buddha. It appears also that the term's usage in the sense of teaching is a later schema rather than being the early Buddhist common notions as generally understood.

With respect to the three academic questions raised in the introductory chapter of this thesis, the answers can be provided as follows:

1) The term *dhammakāya* in early Buddhism can be (re-)interpreted either as an adjective: 'having *dhamma* as body,' or a noun: 'the body that is *dhamma*,' 'the body of *dhamma*,' or 'the body of *dhamma*s.' In these translations, the singular *dhamma* refers to each of transcendental states or *nibbāna*; the plural refers to transcendental qualities constituting those states or the various aspects or qualities of *nibbāna*.

2) In early Buddhism, *dhammakāya* is instrumental to enlightenment. Thus, it is significant soteriologically. Besides, being a designation of the Buddha, as well as representing the incorruptible essence of the Buddha, it is a metaphorical way of referring to the Buddha's essence. In this manner, it is

significant philosophically. Therefore, *dhammakāya* in early Buddhism is significant both philosophically and soteriologically, as the designation of the Buddha and being instrumental to the enlightenment of Buddhist nobles of all types and levels.

3) As the *dhammakāya* signifies the living and functioning body that is effective in the eradication of defilement as well as experiencing the happiness from release, it denotes a kind of 'body,' rather than a mere 'collection.' In this respect, its latter component, *kāya*, should not be disregarded.

After all, the study has observed a number of similarities between the characteristic of *dhammakāya* and the *manomayakāya*, which should be mentioned. Firstly, both of them are regarded as being a new personality obtained during a process of mental development. The *dhammakāya* is acquired on the elimination of particular defilements. The *manomayakāya* is obtained on the accomplishment of a meditative state. Secondly, the acquisition of *dhammakāya* is instrumental to final enlightenment. The acquisition of *manomayakāya* is explained as beneficial, if not necessarily instrumental, to the final realisation. Thirdly, a number of different levels of *dhammakāya* are implied in the great nun Gotamī's expression. A number of *manomayakāya* are implied also in the venerable Cullapanthaka's speech regarding the plural *manomayakāya*s. Fourthly, *dhammakāya* is described as being 'blameless' (*anindita*) or 'pleasurable' (*ānandiya*). Also the *manomayakāya* is explained as being complete of all faculties (*ahīnindriya*). As noted earlier, this expression can be used in the sense of 'looking good' as well.

At present, the canonical information seems insufficient to conclude with certainty whether the *dhammakāya* can be identified with *manomayakāya*. Besides, it is evident in the canon that the Buddha sometimes said that his teaching is to lead the listener to pass beyond the acquisition of the mind-made body or self. This leads a number of scholars to conclude that the *manomayakāya* is still mundane and thus cannot be equated with *dhammakāya*

which designates the *Tathāgata*. However, in the sense of the discourse, it seems that the Buddha was referring to the acquisition of the mind-made body after death. In other words, he was referring to the rebirth within the *rūpāvacara* world which is still under the cycle of suffering (*saṃsāra*). It may be speculative, then, that the *manomayakāya* acquired in the meditative states could be different from the *manomayakāya* of the *rūpāvacara* deities. This could be considered for further research.

In addition, the conclusion in this research has been arrived at by means of the employment of the information provided in the Pali canon. Further research may help construct a more complete picture regarding *dhammakāya* in early Buddhism with the information provided in the canonical texts of other early Buddhist schools.

Appendices

Appendix I

Problems about the Dating of the *Apadāna* Literature

Apadāna literature is the thirteenth among the fifteen texts belonging to the *Khuddaka-nikāya* of the Pali canon. A number of scholars question its position as part of the 'closed set' of the Pali canon.[905] Frequently, the text is considered 'late'[906] and is sometimes claimed to be 'the commentaries to the poems attributed to monks and nuns.'[907] However, it is observed that these claims are questionable due either to the problematic data employed or to uncertain interpretation of certain Pali terms.

Scholarly claims of the lateness of the *Apadāna* literature, or their denial of its canonical position, was centred on two main reasons. Firstly, the *Sumaṅgalavilāsinī*[908] of the PTS version explains that the *Dīghabhāṇaka*s[909] exclude the *Apadāna* literature from the list of texts belonging to the *Khuddaka-nikāya.*[910] Law comments that such an exclusion might have resulted from 'sectarian difference of opinion' or might indicate that the text had not yet been in existence at the time the *Dīghabhāṇaka* drew up the list.[911] Perera considers that the *Apadāna* literature was not yet considered as belonging to the *Khuddaka-nikāya* during the time when the *Dīghabhāṇaka* list was completed.[912]

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[905] For example, see Cutler, op. cit., p. 2; Tessa Bartholomeusz, "Mothers of Buddhas, Mothers of Nations: Kumaranatunga and Her Meteoric Rise to Power in Sri Lanka.(Prime Minister Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaranatunga)," *Feminist studies* 25, no. 1 (1999): 211.

[906] For example, see Mary E. Lilley, *The Apadana of the Khuddaka Nikaya* (London, New York [etc.]: Pub. for the Pali Text Society by the Oxford University Press, 1925), p. v; H. R. Perera, "Apadāna," in *Encyclopaedia of Buddhism*, ed. G. P. Malalasekera (Colombo: Government of Ceylon, 1961), p. 3.

[907] Bartholomeusz, "Mothers of Buddhas," op. cit., note 1 p. 211.

[908] *Sumaṅgalavilāsinī* is the title of Buddhaghosa's commentary on the *Dīgha-nikāya.*

[909] During the time of the transmission of Buddhist teaching by means of oral tradition, groups of monks were responsible for recitation of particular texts. The word '*Dīghabhāṇaka*s' refers to monks who were responsible for the recitation of the *Dīgha-nikāya* text.

[910] Bimala Churn Law, *A History of Pali Literature* (London,: K. Paul, Trench, Trubner & co., ltd., 1933), p. 7.

[911] Ibid.

[912] Perera, op. cit., p. 3.

Secondly, Law remarks that one of the *Apadāna*s allude to the *Kathāvatthu* as an *Abhidhamma* composition. This should suggest that the text was written later than the compilation of the *Kathāvatthu*[913] in King *Asoka*'s reign, which was very late. Perara refers to Law's observation and to Rhys Davids's further comment[914] to conclude that the *Apadāna* must be one of the latest texts of the canon.[915] Likewise, Hazra lists all the above scholarly comments to support that the *Apadāna* literature is a later incorporation.[916]

However, it can be observed that the information on which the above claims are based is either problematic or not conclusive.

Regarding the first point that the *Dīghabhāṇaka*s exclude the *Apadāna* literature from their list of the *Khuddaka-nikāya* canonical texts, the information presented in different versions of the *Sumaṅgalavilāsinī* varies. Only the PTS version, on which the above scholarly arguments were based, records such an exclusion of the *Apadāna* literature from the *Dīghabhāṇaka* list, while the CS and SR versions record it differently.

According to the PTS version of the *Sumaṅgalavilāsinī*, the *Dīghabhāṇaka*s listed twelve texts recited in the communal recitation as belonging to the *Khuddakagantha* which is classed as *Abhidhamma-piṭaka*.[917] The *Majjhimabhāṇaka*s, however, counted all the fifteen texts including the *Cariyāpiṭaka*, *Apadāna*, and *Buddhavaṃsa* into the *Khuddakagantha* and classed as *Suttanta-piṭaka*.

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913 '*Kathāvatthu*' is the title of a particular text of the *Abhidhamma-piṭaka*, compiled in order to clarify the 'correct view' according to traditional Theravāda of the time.

914 Here, Rhys Davids comments, "if it is so, the *Apadāna* must be one of the very latest books of the canon." Perera, op. cit., p. 3. Bibliographical details of both Law's and Rhys Davids's writings are not given.

915 Ibid.

916 Kanai Lal Hazra, *Pali Language and Literature: A Systematic Survey and Historical Study*, Emerging Perceptions in Buddhist Studies; No. 4-5. (New Delhi: D.K. Printworld, 1994), pp. 321-322.

917 DA.I.15. *Tato paraṃ Jātakaṃ Mahā-niddeso Cūla-niddeso Paṭisambhidā-maggo Sutta-nipāto Dhamma-padaṃ Udānaṃ Itivuttakaṃ Vimāna-peta-vatthu Thera-theri-gathā ti imaṃ tantiṃ saṃgāyitvā Khudaka-gantho nāma ayan ti ca vatvā, Abhidhamma-piṭakasmiṃ yeva saṃgahaṃ āropayiṃsūti Dīgha-bhāṇakā vadanti, Majjhima-bhāṇakā pana Cariyā-piṭaka-Apadāna-Buddhavaṃsesu saddhiṃ sabbam pi taṃ Khuddakaganthaṃ suttanta-piṭake pariyāpannan ti vadanti.*

The CS and SR versions record it differently.[918] Herein, the *Dīghabhāṇaka*s listed twelve texts, including the *Apadāna*, as recited in the communal recitation and classed into the *Khuddakagantha* of the *Abhidhamma-piṭaka*. The *Majjhimabhāṇaka*s count all of them, including the *Cariyāpiṭaka* and *Buddhavaṃsa*, as the *Khuddakagantha* texts belonging to the *Suttanta-piṭaka*.[919]

Due to such variant readings between different versions of text, it is hard to consider that the *Apadāna* is late merely because the PTS version says so.

Moreover, the production of the PTS version at this particular portion appears unusual. To elaborate, the contents of all other parts of the text were obtained generally by means of a comparison between one Burmese and four different Sinhalese manuscripts. However, the content of the first twenty-five pages, which contains the passage of our interest, was obtained from an older roman transcription by Childers, without a consultation of those Sinhalese manuscripts as usual. As the editors of the text state:

> For the first 25 pages we had the use of a transcript made by Childers from a Sinhalese MS. This was so correct, and Buddhaghosa's words in this portion of the work follow so closely the words of his Samanta Pāsādikā as already edited by Professor Oldenberg, that we did not think it necessary to collate the other Sinhalese MSS. for that portion of our text.[920]

In brief, the content of the text in this portion was *simply adopted* from a previous roman transcription of a *single* Sinhalese manuscript because the context given in that previous transcription goes well with that recorded in the

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918 Unfortunately, the BJ version of the commentarial texts is not available or accessible to the present work.

919 DA.I.16. (CS, SR) *Tato paraṃ jātakaṃ, niddeso, paṭisambhidāmaggo, apadānaṃ suttanipāto, khuddakapāṭho, dhammapadaṃ, udānaṃ, itivuttakaṃ, vimānavatthu, petavatthu, theragāthā, therīgāthāti imaṃ tantiṃ saṅgāyitvā "khuddakagantho nāmāyan"ti ca vatvā "abhidhammapiṭakasmiṃyeva saṅgahaṃ āropayiṃsū"ti dīghabhāṇakā vadanti. Majjhimabhāṇakā pana "cariyāpiṭakabuddhavaṃsehi saddhiṃ sabbampetaṃ khuddakaganthaṃ nāma suttantapiṭake pariyāpannan"ti vadanti.*

Herein, it is mentioned that the *Dīgha*-reciters count 12 collections of teachings, including the *Apadāna*, as those recited in the communal recitation. These collections were collectively called "*Khuddaka-gantha*" and are classed by the *Dīgha*-reciters as part of *Abhidhamma-piṭaka*. However, the *Majjhima*-reciters count all the *Khuddaka-gantha* texts as well as the *Cariyāpiṭaka* and the *Buddhavaṃsa* as belonging to the *Sutta-piṭaka*. In spite of such different classifications, the canonical position of the *Apadāna* text is approved.

920 T. W. Rhys Davids and J. Estlin Carpenter, *The Sumanngala-Vilasini : Buddhaghosa's Commentary on the Digha Nikaya*, 2nd ed., 3 vols. (London: Published for the Pali Text Society by Luzac & Co, 1968), p. vi.

Samantapāsādikā[921] already edited. Nevertheless, it can be observed further that the *Samantapāsādikā*, as asserted in the above quote, does not contain the passages regarding the *bhāṇaka* tradition at all. The similarity between the context of both texts is only on the overview picture regarding the first communal recitation.[922] Hence, the passages regarding the ascription of texts into different *nikāya*s in the *Sumaṅgalavilāsinī* of the PTS version was obtained from the 'old roman transcription by Childers *alone*, without any consultation of the four Sinhalese manuscripts available at hand.

Considering the unusual production of this particular portion of the PTS text, and the variant reading given in two other versions[923] of the same text, the claim of the late dating of *Apadāna* in this regard appears debatable, and its canonical position cannot be rejected.

Another reason that accounts for scholarly claims regarding the late dating of the *Apadāna* text, is the allusion to the '*Kathāvatthu*' as an *Abhidhamma* composition, which is found in a particular *Apadāna*.[924] The passage referred to in this regard is the *Puṇṇa-Mantāniputta-therāpadāna*. According to this text, the elder says:

> Abhidhammanayañño haṃ kathāvatthuvisuddhiyā
> sabbesaṃ viññāpetvāna viharāmi anāsavo.
>
> Ap.I.37.
>
> I am the knower of the implications of the *abhidhamma* and in the prime purity of *kathāvatthu*. I live free of canker, instructing all people.

In this verse, the venerable Puṇṇa proclaims that he is wise in the '*abhidhamma*' and in the prime purity of the '*kathāvatthu*.' Being familiar with the later connotations of the words '*abhidhamma*' and '*kathāvatthu*,' one may readily conclude that the elder is claiming that he is wise in the context of the *Kathāvatthu* section of the *Abhidhammapiṭaka*. As evinced in the *Sutta-piṭaka*,

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921 This is the title of Buddhaghosa's commentary on the *Vinaya-piṭaka*.

922 The similarity of context ends at page 16 of the *Samantapāsādikā* and page 14 of the *Sumaṅgalavilāsinī*. The passage regarding the *Dīghabhānaka* and *Majjhimabhānaka* ascription of texts is found on page 15 of the *Sumaṅgalavilāsinī*.

923 This refers to the CS and SR versions.

924 Law, op. cit., p. 7; Perera, op. cit., p. 3; Hazra, op. cit., pp. 321-322.

however, these two words were already in use in the Buddha's time, when their original meanings were different from the present understanding.

The word '*kathāvatthu*' is found in the old corpus of the canon, i.e., the *Suttapiṭaka*. It may signify subjects of talk or discussion,[925] such as talks regarding past, present, or future issues in which case it is expressed as 'three subjects of saying' (*tīṇi kathāvatthūni*).[926] It can denote topics of talk or discussion that are appropriate for Buddhist monks, in which case it is entitled 'ten topics of (appropriate) talk' (*dasa kathāvatthu*).[927]

It is most likely that the '*kathāvatthu*' mentioned in the case of the venerable Puṇṇa-Mantāniputta refers to the latter usage of the term. It refers to the 'ten subjects of talk appropriate for monks' (*dasa kathāvatthu*). As is evident in the *rathavinīta-sutta*, the fellow monks, as a response to the Buddha's question, praise the elder Puṇṇa that he is endowed with ten qualities and his talk is favourable to those ten qualities.[928] The talk favourable to the ten qualities, as mentioned in the *sutta*, is the same as 'talk appropriate for Buddhist monks' as enumerated in the 'ten topics of talk' (*dasa kathāvatthu*) mentioned earlier. In other words, the elder Puṇṇa Mantāniputta not only himself is endowed with those qualities, but also persuades his fellow monks regarding the endowment

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[925] For example, see M.I.372, M.II.107,

[926] D.III.220, A.I.197,

[927] A.V.129.

The ten subjects of talk appropriate for Buddhist monks are as follows:

1. *appicchakathā* - talk favourable to wanting little.
2. *santuṭṭhikathā* - talk favourable to contentment
3. *pavivekakathā* -talk favourable to seclusion
4. *asaṃsaggakathā* - talk favourable to not mingling together
5. *viriyārambhakathā* - talk favourable to making effort or energy
6. *sīlakathā* - talk favourable to virtue, precept
7. *samādhikathā* - talk favourable to concentration or meditation
8. *paññākathā* - talk favourable to insight
9. *vimuttikathā* - talk favourable to deliverance
10. *vimuttiñāṇakathā* - talk favourable to the knowledge and vision of deliverance

[928] M.I.145.

of those qualities. Thus, it is likely that the term '*kathāvatthu*' mentioned in the *Apadāna* of the elder Puṇṇa refers to this kind of talk rather than to the *Kathāvatthu* as one of the Abhidhamma texts.

The same holds true for the word '*abhidhamma'* mentioned together in the same *Apadāna*. During the time of the Buddha, the word '*abhidhamma*' was used in a non-technical sense. It does not refer to 'a corpus of text' as generally understood at the present. Rather, the term seems to refer to the 'essence of *dhamma*,' in the sense of the Buddha's teaching in relation to spiritual realisation. It is evident that a monk who is qualified in both meditation and instruction would be described as a knower of the '*abhidhamma*,' as in the case of the elder Moggallāna.[929] The same can be said for the elder Puṇṇa Mantāniputta, who was the best among fellow monks who were preachers (*dhammakathika*)[930] and was endowed with qualities favourable to spiritual realisation. Hence, it is likely that the word '*abhidhamma*' in the proclamation of the elder Puṇṇa-Mantāniputta should refer to 'essence of *dhamma*,' rather than to the *Abhidhamma-piṭaka* as understood generally.

That being the case, it is more likely that the words '*abhidhamma*' and '*kathāvatthu*' found in the elder Puṇṇa's *Apadāna* do not refer to the *Kathāvattahu* text of the *Abhidhamma-piṭaka*, but to 'appropriate talk' and 'the essence of *dhamma*' respectively.[931] So the mere mention of both words in the same verse does not necessarily mean to indicate the late dating of the *Apadāna*.

As Norman states, there is sufficient evidence that this collection is a "common property of both Theravādins and Sarvāstivādins, and is therefore likely to be

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[929] M.I.218.

[930] S.II.156, A.I.23.

[931] The same can be concluded for the *Apadāna* of the nun *Khemā* [Ap.550] who is the best among fellow nuns in regard to wisdom [A.I.25], and who is known also as an excellent preacher. For example, see S.IV.374-377.

quite early."[932] This work, therefore, considers the *Apadāna* section of the *Khuddaka-nikāya* as one among the texts of the early Buddhist period.

[932] Norman, *Pali Literature*, op. cit., p. 92.

Appendix II

Traditional Accounts Regarding the Body that Witnesses the *Dhamma*s

As to the question of which kind of body 'touches,' or 'witnesses,' i.e., 'experiences' or 'realises,' the meditative states, or the 'deathless realm,' traditional accounts provide further explanation in different ways.

1. *Nāmakāya* = Group of mental states

The Pali commentaries of the Theravāda school identify the body in question with *nāmakāya*, 'the mental body.' It is explained that 'the mental body' (*nāmakāya*),[933] or the mental body that co-arises[934] with the deliverances,[935] touched (*phusitvā*),[936] obtained (*paṭilabhitvā*),[937] or attained (*pāpuṇitvā*, *adhigantvā*),[938] realising (*sacchikaroti*) those states.[939] Also, the wisdom that 'sees' or 'penetrates' the truth in such states is explained as the 'wisdom of the path associated with the mental body.'[940] Sometimes, this mental body (*nāmakāya*) is even identified with the paths and fruits (*maggaphala*) which reach the deathless.[941]

The *Paṭisambhidāmagga* elaborates that the 'mental body' (*nāmakāya*) includes sensation (*vedanā*), perception (*saññā*), volition (*cetanā*), contact (*phassa*) and attention (*manasikāra*).[942] These five mental factors are also

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933 MA.I.162, SA.III.248, AA.III.114, AA.III.379.

934 *sahajātanāmakāyena phusitvā*. MA.III.191, AA.IV.206.

935 *vimokkhasahajātena nāmakāyena.* PPA.177.

936 AA.III.114, AA.III.379, JA.V.252.

937 SA.II.126, SA.III.247.

938 MA.I.162, ItA.II.4.

939 MA.III.193.

940 *Paññāya cāti nāmakāyasampayuttāya maggapaññāya paµivijjhati passati*. MA.III.193.

941 It.46. *Kāyena amataṃ dhātuṃ phassayitvā nirūpadhiṃ.* Cf. ItA.II.4. *kāyenāti nāmakāyena maggaphalehi*.

942 Ps.I.138.

called merely ‘mentality’ (*nāma*) [943] or mental conditioning factors (*cittasaṅkhāra*). [944]

This mental body is described as the body that experiences the happiness divested of joy, as expressed in the description of the third *jhāna*.[945] It is this body that diffuses the joy and happiness related to the attainment of the fruit (*phalasamāpatti*).[946] When the venerable Sāriputta declares his attainment of the *dhamma*s he has heard previously, it is his mental body (*nāmakāya*) that is said to ‘touch’ or ‘witness’ those *dhamma*s. Having witnessed this, his confidence (*saddhā*) became powerful, i.e., it is altered to the faculty of confidence essential for enlightenment (*saddhindriya*).[947]

In most cases of a ‘body’ which is said to experience various meditative states, particularly the advanced states, the Pali commentaries identify it with this mental-body. [948] It is only in a few cases of basic states such as calm (*passaddhi*) that the meditative state is said to be experienced with both mental-body (*nāmakāya*) and physical body (*rūpakāya*).[949]

Generally, the Theravāda school claims that the mental body (*nāmakāya*), or the mentality (*nāma*), is formless (*arūpa*).[950] Nevertheless, sometimes the Pali *Abhidhamma* refers to it as taking part in the origination of refined form (*rūpa*).

In the explanation of the third *jhāna*, regarding the bodily experiences of happiness (*sukha*), the meditator's physical body is ‘touched’ by ‘the extremely excellent form’ (*atipaṇīta rūpa*) originating from the happiness associated with

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[943] S.II.3-4.

[944] Ps.I.138.

[945] NdA.I.140.

[946] Th.II.139-140. Cf. ThA.160.

[947] S.V.226. Cf. SA.III.247.

[948] For example, see A.III.114.

[949] MA.I.124.

[950] Nett.28. Cf. NettA.93.

the mental body (*nāmakāya*). This gives the practitioner the continuing bodily comfort or happiness even after emerging from the *jhāna*.[951]

Also, the interaction between name and form, or mentality and materiality, (*nāma* and *rūpa*) is observed in the *Mahānidāna-sutta*, where the Buddha clarifies how the contact depends on both of them. Here, it is said that the appearance of the subtle designation-contact (*adhivacanasamphassa*) of the physical body depends on the conditions, features, characters, and exponents by which the mental body is declared. In the same way, the appearance of the sense-contact (*paṭighasamphassa*) of the mental body depends on the conditions, features, characteristics and exponents by which the physical body is declared.[952] Thus, the former is said to be the cause of the immaterial contact of the latter, and the latter is said to be the cause of the material contact of the former.

A Pali commentary defines the designation-contact (*adhivacanasamphassa*) as mental contact based on the mind-gate (*manodvārika*), and the sense-contact (*paṭighasamphassa*) as physical contact based on the five physical gates (*pañcadvārika*) respectively.[953] It defines the latter (*pañcadvārika*) as the literal definition of sense contact;[954] and identifies the designation-contact with the former (*manodvārika*) merely by conformation. It refers to the contact co-arising with the three mental aggregates except consciousness (*viññāṇa*), i.e., sensation (*vedanā*), perception (*saññā*), and the volitional activities (*saṅkhāra*).[955]

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[951]VinA.I.152, NdA.I.140, DhsA.175.

[952] D.II.62.

[953] *Manodvāriko adhivacanasamphasso. Pañcadvāriko vatthārammaṇādipaṭighena uppajjanato paṭighasamphasso.* NdA.I.168.

[954] *Paṭighasamphassoti nippariyāyena pana paṭighasamphasso nāma pañcadvārikaphasso.* NdA.II.233.

[955] *manosamphasso hadayavatthukopi avatthukopi sabbo catubhūmako phasso. Adhivacanasamphassoti pariyāyena etassa nāmaṃ hotiyeva. Tayo hi arūpino khandhā sayaṃ piṭṭhivaṭṭakā hutvā attano sahajātasamphassassa adhivacana-samphassoti nāmaṃ karonti. ... Adhivacanasamphasso nāma manodvārikaphasso.* NdA.II.233.

While the Theravāda Pali commentaries present the mental body simply as a list of mental states, the obscurity at some points, as well as the mention of the 'extremely excellent form' arising in the third *jhāna*, seems to allow some space for different interpretation.

2. *Nāmakāya* = The subtle body co-arising with the attainment of stages

Besides the Theravāda elaborations, some scholars understand the mental body (*nāmakāya*) in different ways. Falk, for example, identifies the mental body mentioned in the *Mahānidāna-sutta* with *manomaya-kāya* which was mentioned previously.[956] She does not see it merely as a group of mental states. Rather, she describes it as a complete body with limbs and parts, similar to the physical body and the mind-made body noted above. However, she still refers to them with the same names mentioned in the Pali canon, i.e., *vedanākāya*[957] and *saññākāya*.[958] In this way, the *vedanākāya* and *saññākāya* are not seen merely as 'a collection of sensations' and 'a collection of perceptions;' but they are complete bodies composed of sensations and perceptions, in the same way as is the physical body composed of the four great elements. They are still a 'body of mental states;' but with the sense of a 'totality,' as 'bodies' that can function as a whole.

This is based on her understanding that the attainment of *jhāna*s or meditative states, either *rūpa* or *arūpa*, means to experience them 'by means of successive bodies conformable to their spheres,'[959] as she couples *manomaya-kāya*, which she defines as *vedanā-kāya*, with *rūpadhātu*, and *saññā-kāya* with *arūpadhātu*.[960]

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[956] Falk, *Nāma-Rūpa and Dharma-Rūpa*, op. cit., p. 109.

[957] D.III.243, M.I.51, M.III.281, S.II.3.

[958] D.III.244, S.III.60, 63.

[959] Ibid., p. 110.

[960] Ibid., p. 117-118.

As stated earlier, the mention of an 'extremely excellent body arising in the third *jhāna*' in the Pali commentaries seems to give way to the same interpretation, as Falk states:

> This *manomaya-kāya* (for her = *vedanākāya*) is doubtless the 'body' with which the meditator experiences *sukha* in the first three *dhyānas* (explicitly mentioned in the formula relating to the third *dhyāna*).'[961]

Falk also identifies the bodily experience of *nirodha*, which is mentioned earlier in the Pali canon, as an experience achieved 'by means of a body conformable to the transcendent *nirodha-dhātu*.'[962] Again, she calls this body the '*nirodha-body*' (*nirodha-kāya*) that is 'attained by the *kāyasakkhī* in *saññāvedayitanirodha*,' which she defines as the elimination of *saññā*.[963]

Although her interpretation seems to be unknown to many orthodox Buddhists, it is evident that some Buddhist schools must have such a principle in mind. For example, the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam* seems to understand 'the body that witnesses,' rather than as the 'group of mental factors' understood by the traditional Theravāda, merely as the physical body that receives an impression from 'a body that arises in the absorption of extinction' (*nirodhasamāpatti*). Here, it is stated:

> As the *Anāgāmin*, whichever one he may be, has acquired extinction -- as he has, in his body, seen the absence of thought and immediately experienced (*sākṣātkaroti*) a *dharma* similar to Nirvāṇa, namely the Absorption of Extinction -- he is called a *Kāyasākṣin*, a bodily witness.[964]

As to the question of how this can be experienced by the (physical) body alone, the Vaibhāṣikas explain it as the immediate perception taking place, dependent on the body, at the absence of thought. But the Sautrāntikas explain it otherwise. According to the latter, the meditator, upon leaving the 'Absorption of Extinction' (*nirodhasamāpatti*), acquires a 'never previously acquired' peacefulness of the body. This is to take place in two steps. Firstly, "during the

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[961] Ibid., p. 113.

[962] Ibid., p. 111.

[963] Ibid., p. 118.

[964] Vasubandhu, Poussin, and Pruden, *Abhidharmakosabhasyam*, op. cit., pp. 977-978.

absorption, there is the acquisition (*prāpti*)[965] of a body conforming to the extinction." And secondly, "upon leaving the absorption, there is a consciousness which becomes conscious of the state of the body."

It may be assumed that this principle is indeed known to the traditional Theravāda also, as the mention of the rise of the 'extremely excellent form (*rūpa*) originating from the happiness associated with the mental body (*nāmakāya*)' in the third *jhāna* suggests.

Up to this point, it has been observed that the term *kāya* in the compound *kāyasakkhi*, or the 'body that witnesses the *dhamma*,' can be interpreted in various ways. In Theravāda interpretation, it is said to be the 'mental body' (*nāmakāya*) understood to be 'group of mental states.' The analytical style of Theravāda presentation gives an impression of the *nāmakāya* more as a mere 'collection,' rather than giving any sense of something that is 'living' and 'functioning.' In contrast, Falk's interpretation and the explanation of the other Buddhist schools recorded in the *Abhidharmakośa Bhāṣya*, although they could be seen as providing an overtly physical sense, given their idea of a 'body' that can function in the same way as the physical body can**,** they provide no detail regarding its components.

Indeed, it can be said that they are talking about the same thing, for such a body should be seen as possessing a twofold meaning. First, the 'body that witnesses the *dhamma*' is the *nāmakāya*, the mental factors each of which has its own function. Secondly, these mental factors are collected together as a 'body' that is 'living' and 'functioning.' Without their coming together, interacting with each other, and interacting with the physical body**,** they cannot function. In other words, these mental factors cannot work independently from the 'totality'**,** which indicates that the the term *kāya* signifies 'body' rather than 'collection.'

[965] This is the same as Pali '*patti*' = obtaining, acquisition, attainment, gain.

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